00140940

NOT TO BE ISSUED OUT
WITHOUT PERMISSION.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 27 February, 2016

A

CATHOLIC HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND.

BY WILLIAM BERNARD MAC CABE.

PART I.—ENGLAND; ITS RULERS, CLERGY, AND POOR, BEFORE THE REFORMATION, AS DESCRIBED BY THE MONKISH HISTORIANS.

140940
a c.

VOL. II.

AC
1951

LONDON:
T. C. NEWBY, 72, MORTIMER ST., CAVENDISH SQ.
1849.

JL 0940

PROSEQUENTES ORDINEM TEMPORUM, MIXTE CONFUSEQUE TAM VIRTUTES SANCTORUM, QUAM STRAGES GENTIUM MEMORAMUS. NON ENIM INRATIONABILITER ACCIPI PUTO, SI FELICEM BEATORUM VITAM INTER MISERORUM MEMOREMUS EXCIDIA, CUM ID NON FACILITAS SCRIPTORIS, SED TEMPORUM SERIES PRÆSTET.

S. GREGOR. TURONENS.

INDEX

TO

CONTENTS OF CHAPTERS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	ETHELWULF. (A.D. 836—858.) . .	1
II.	THE REIGNS OF ATHELBALD, ETHELBERT, AND ETHERED. (A.D. 858—871)	69
III.	ALFRED. (A.D. 871—901.) . . .	155
IV.	EDWARD THE ELDER. (A.D. 901—925.)	285
V.	ATHELSTAN. (A.D. 925—941.) . .	341
VI.	EDMUND I. (A.D. 941—946.) . .	427
VII.	EDRED. (A.D. 946—955.) . . .	455
VIII.	EDWY. (A.D. 955—959.) . . .	497
IX.	ST. EDGAR THE CONFESSOR. (A.D. 959—975.)	523

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE third volume of the present work, which will close with the Accession of William the Conqueror, may, it is hoped, be ready for publication about the commencement of next year.

In making this announcement, I think it right thus early to state that the third volume will also bring to a conclusion my labours, at least for the present, and probably for ever, upon the History of England, prior to the Reformation.

Such an arrangement is a departure from my original intention, and from the plan that I had laid down in commencing this task, and for the completion of which I had arranged the materials.

The reasons for abandoning that plan should, I conceive, be stated distinctly, for the satisfaction of those whose

kind opinions have cheered me in my labours, and whose patronage has encouraged me to continue them.

It was mentioned in the Introduction to this work, that the labours devoted to the Catholic History constituted the occupation of those hours not required in the services of others to whom my time belonged, and who had a right to command my exertions for the promotion of their interests.

In the endeavour to discharge those imperative duties—duties that neither could, with justice to those dependent upon me for support, be neglected, nor, in honesty towards those who employed me, be slurred over, or half-performed, whilst I at the same time proceeded with this History—it has habitually happened for years, that my toil commencing at ten o'clock in the day, has been prolonged without an hour's intermission until one and two o'clock the following morning.

To proceed with this work on the plan with which I commenced, and to bring to a conclusion its First Part—that is, *the History of England as written in the very words used by the Monkish Historians*, would require at least, for one situated as I am, fifteen more years of a life of such ceaseless labour as I have described.

My health, I am conscious, could not continue with such toil, and therefore I deem it to be best to pause in my labours whilst it remains unbroken.

These then are the reasons that compel me to bring the Catholic History to a close with the third volume. I cannot proceed without endangering that which is my only property—my health; and I cannot afford to give up my entire time to the task I had commenced.

I am sorry to have had to say so much of myself, to those who have proved my kind readers and my indulgent judges.

I have endeavoured by my labours to correspond with the opinions that have been expressed; and my humble hope is, that the present volume may, for the space of time it occupies, be considered as the work in the English language which gives the fullest account, that has yet been published, of the events that occurred in England, and, with the events, of the great as well as the good men who took part in them, between the years 836 and 975.

29, Upper Belgrave Place, Pimlico,
London, April 26th, 1849.

A

CATHOLIC HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

ETHELWULF.

ETHELWULF, the son of Egbert. . At one time a monk and sub-deacon in Winchester. . Released from his vows by the Pope. . Ascends the throne. Marriage of Ethelwulf. Names of his children. Character of Ethelwulf. . He transfers a portion of his dominions to his son Athelstan. Athelstan supposed to be St. Neot. Wars with the Danes. . They attack London, and lay waste Kent. . They are frequently repulsed and punished. The king's advisers,—the bishops St. Swithin and Alstan. The latter an able statesman. . Worthy of praise for his political conduct, but of censure for appropriating to his own purposes the monastery of Malmesbury. The Danish invasion worse than any former or succeeding affliction of the same kind. . Its horrors described and its causes accounted for by Henry of Huntingdon. Battles with the Danes in the year 837. Massacres by the Danes in the year 838. St. Swithin consecrated bishop of Winchester. Embassy from the king of England to Louis-le-debonnaire. Extraordinary vision of an English priest. Mas-

sacres by the Danes in the year 839. Ethelwulf defeated at Charmouth by the Danes in 840. Battle between the Northumbrians and Danes in 844. The Danes defeated in Somersetshire in 845. The birth of King Alfred. Martyrdom of the royal Saint Wistan.. His pious life and death described.. His assassin instantly punished. Removal of the relics of the British empress St. Helena in 849. The Danes defeated in 851.. Take up their quarters in Sheppey. An immense number of Danes sail up the Thames in 851.. Take Canterbury and London by storm.. They defeat Bertwulf, king of the Mercians. Bertwulf's conduct as a spoliator of monasteries described. A Danish army destroyed by King Ethelwulf. In a sea-fight the Danes are defeated by the Prince and King Athelstan. Council in 851. Miracle in honour of St. Guthlac. Alfred the Great attacked with illness in his infancy and sent to Ireland, where he is miraculously cured. The Irish Saint Modwena. Pollesworth convent, and Burton Abbey. Marriage of Burhred, king of the Mercians, with Ethelswitha, daughter of Ethelwulf. War against the Welsh. Desperate battle in Thanet between the Danes and English. Alfred sent to Rome.. Is received as a guest at the monastery of St. Bertin. The Abbot Grimbald and the boy Alfred. Pope Leo IV. anoints Alfred as a king. Magnificent donation of King Ethelwulf to the church in the year 844. Consecration of St. Edmund, king of the East Angles. King Ethelwulf, accompanied by Alfred, travels to Rome, and is the bearer to the Pope of the Peter's-pence.. Rebuilds in Rome "the school of the English." Marriage of Ethelwulf with the Princess Judith daughter of Charles the Bald. Conspiracy against Ethelwulf, headed by his son Athelbald. Ethelwulf's proposition to secure peace. Division of the West Saxon kingdom. Judith permitted to occupy the throne as a Queen. Remarkable bequests made by Ethelwulf for the benefit of the poor, and the repose of his own soul.. Testimonies of his attachment to the Pope of Rome. Death of Ethelwulf.

CHAPTER I.

ETHELWULF.

A.D. 836—858.

ETHELWULF, the son of King Egbert, ascended the West Saxon throne upon the death of his father,* and reigned for eighteen years and six months.† Ethelwulf had at one time been a monk, and had even taken orders as sub-deacon, in the church of Winchester; but had subse-

---

* "And feng tha Æthelwulf Ecgbryhting to West-Seaxna riice."—*Saxon Chron.* A.D. 836. ROGER DE WENDOVER, vol. i. p. 279, (E. H. S.) RUDBORNE, *Hist. Major.* lib. iii. c. 2, *Ang. Sacra,* vol. i. p. 200, fix the date of the accession of Ethelwulf in the year 837. According to Mr. Hardy, (*notes on Wm. of Malmesbury,* vol. i. p. 149,) this event did not take place till the year 839. Florence of Worcester (p. 581) coincides with the date given by the Saxon Chronicle. The chronicle of Melrose states that the death of Egbert and accession of Ethelwulf occurred in the year 838. (*Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores,* GALE, vol. i. p. 142.)

† ASSER *Annales,* A.D. 839. *Rer. Anglicar. Script.* (GALE,) vol. iii. p. 155. Malmesbury states that he reigned for five and twenty years. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 108. See note by Hardy, vol. i. pp. 149, 150, (E. H. S.)

quently been released from his vows by the sanctified Pope Leo, in order that he might receive the royal crown, as his father Egbert had no other son to inherit his title and possess his power.*

By the marriage with his queen,† Ethelwulf became the parent of four sons; all of whom were renowned. The first was Athelbald, the second Ethelbert, the third Ethelred, the fourth Alfred; and these, in due succession to each other, ruled as sovereigns, after the death of their father.‡

Ethelwulf, who was also called Athulf,§ was naturally of a mild and gentle disposition. He was far more desirous to pass his life in peace, than to be the supreme ruler over many provinces. In accordance with such an inclination, he contented himself with the government of the kingdom of the West-Saxons, which he had inherited from his father, whilst those provinces which his sire had won in war and rendered dependent upon the West-Saxon

---

* RUDBORNE, *Hist. Maj.* lib. iii. c. 2. *Ang. Sac.* vol. i. p. 200. W. MALMSB. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 242. (Script. post Bedam.)

† We learn from Asser that her name was Osbvrga, and that she was of royal blood, descended from the Goths and the Jutes, and also "quæ erat filia Oslac famosi *pincernæ* Æthelwulfi *regis*." *Vit. Ælf.* Anglica, Normannica, Hibernica, Cambrica Scripta. (CAMDEN) p. 1.

‡ ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 279.

§ W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 108. "The name of this king has been disfigured by that variety of orthography which prevailed at this time, and often confuses history. Ethelwulphus, Ethelfus, Athulfus, Adulfus, Aithulfus, Adhelwlfus, Athelwlfus, Atwulfus." —TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 486.

crown, he transferred to his son Athelstan,* whose death and the time when it occurred are alike uncertain.†

---

* It is doubtful whether Athelstan was the son or the brother of King Ethelwulf. Florence of Worcester, (p. 581, ad an. 836), Ethelwerd, (lib. iii. c. 3, p. 841) and the Saxon Chronicle, ad an. 836, (Ingram's edition) agree with Malmsbury in calling him the son of Ethelwulf. Henry of Huntingdon, (lib. iv. p. 345) and Roger de Hoveden, in this portion of his annals a copyist from Henry of Huntingdon (see pp. 412, 413), and the Chronicle of Melrose (ad an. 839), state Athelstan to have been the brother of Ethelwulf. The latter statement is, we think, the more probable, for we find Athelstan conducting himself in his battles with the Danes as an experienced warrior both by land and sea: as one who, if the son of Egbert, must have had considerable practice as a soldier; whilst no such achievements could have been expected from him if he were a young man, and the son of Ethelwulf. The spiritual care bestowed upon Ethelwulf by his confessor and adviser, St. Swithin, are repugnant to the assertion of Roger de Wendover (vol. i. p. 279) and Rudborne (lib. iii. c. 2, p. 201.) It is plain from the words of Asser (Vit. Ælf. p. 1), that Ethelwulf was not married until he became a king; and it is most improbable that the previous life of a Prince would have been marked with impurity, when all his acts prove him to have been most pious. As a youth, he is thus described by Wallingford, "Invaluitque sub manu disciplinæ Sancti in discipulo tantum literaturæ affectio, ut diu præhabitam et inter magnos viros versatam Sancto solveret quæstionem. * * * elegit sub tonsatura clericorum vivere Christo, quam sub regali potentia deservire mundo."—*Chronica*, vol. iii. p. 532 (Gale). Malmsbury also says of him: "nihil faceret nisi ratum, nihil juberet nisi pium."—*Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 242.

To these statements and probabilities we may add the fact, that one copy of the Saxon Chronicle positively states that Athelstan was the son of Egbert. It says, "feng Ethelwulf his sunu to West Seaxna rice; and Ethelstan *his other sunu*, feng to Cantwara rice." See Turner's *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 490, note 14. Alford *Annal. Eccles. Anglican.* vol. iii. p. 54, § 6. (Ed. Liege, 1663.)

† If the statement of Fordun be correct, Athelstan was killed by the Picts, and his remains treated with ignominy.—"*Regis* vero *caput* ob tam miraculosæ cædis memoriam, abscisso a corpore Rex secum afferens, in medio maris Scotici cujusdam summitate rupis *palo præcepit infigi*, cunctis transeuntibus per annos aliquot

In the course of his reign, Ethelwulf supplied with a military force, Burhred, the king of the Mercians, when waging war against the Welsh, and by bestowing his daughter in marriage upon the same monarch, he conferred upon him an additional dignity. Frequently too, either by himself, or through his generals, he crushed the hostile invasions of the piratical Danes, who traversed the entire island, and harassed every shore by their sudden and unexpected incursions. Still, as the chances of war are ever dubious, so did he, in those conflicts with the Danes, experience many severe calamities, and amongst the rest was doomed to behold London assailed, and almost every part of Kent laid waste. The vigour and

---

ad spectaculum." — *Hist. Scot.* lib. iv. c. 14. vol. iii. p. 666 (GALE). See also BUCHANAN *Rer. Scot. Hist.* lib. v. § 54. In the *Lives of the English Saints*, (Hermit Saints) it is stated that "Prince Athelstan became the monk Neotus," (p. 89) afterwards St. Neot. See also as to St. Neot, PITSIUS *de Illust. Ang. Script.* pp. 167, 168, and DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. iii. pp. 460, 461.

In the year 836 a council of bishops was held at Aix-la-Chapelle, when complaints were made of the spoliations by laymen of the property of the church, and upon the representations then made the property was ordered to be restored. Vit. Ludov. Pii Imp. c. 56.

En ce tens droit entor la Chandelor assembla li empereres grant parlement à Es la Chapele et meesmement d'evesques : la su ordené de l'estat des èglises, et fu faite complainte des rapines et des griés que Pepins et li sien avoit fait aus eglises. Pour ce fu ordené que Pepins et sa gent fussent amoneste à com grant peril de leur ames il avoit tolues et ravies les choses des eglises : si tint ceste amonition bone sin ; car Pepins et sa gent reçurent debonairement l'amonestement de l'empereor et des S. Peres : il obéi volentiers à son pere ; car il rendi aus eglises leur biens et leur possessions, et conferma la restitution par son seel ; et bout que sa gent se tenissent desormais en pais de tiex rapines.—*Gestes de Louis le debonnaire*, c. 21. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vi. p. 164. See also Ann. Bert. ad a. 836, and same vol. pp. 119, 164, 198, 354, 446.

energy of the ministers * of the king presented a constant obstacle to the worst consequences of these misfortunes; for they would never permit the foe to inflict them with impunity; because in concentrating the energies of the kingdom in its general defence, they avenged it and punished the wrong-doers.† The king had, during his reign, as ministers, two most distinguished prelates—St. Swithin of Winchester, and Alstan of Sherborne. These, by their constant admonitions, incited to the study of government a king who seemed to them to be naturally slow to learn, and disinclined to active exertions.‡ Swithin, who regarded with disgust all things that were merely temporary; was the guide of his sovereign in the path to heaven;§

---

* "Consiliariorum." W. Malmsb.

† —— "qui nihil unquam hostes impune delinquere paterentur, quin communi umbone in eos ulciscerentur." W. Malmsb.

‡ "Hi, videntes regem crassioris et hebetis ingenii sedulis admonitionibus ad scientiam regnandi stimulabant." W. Malmsb.

§ In Godwin's work, "De Præsulibus Angliæ," it is said in reference to St. Swithin:—"Non desunt qui asserant (satis hercle ridicule) Angliæ hunc cancellarium extitisse. Hujusmodi muneris ne nomen quidem hic loci adhuc unquam fuerat auditum." This is a curious mode of arguing that a person did not exercise the duties of an office—that of Chancellor, because a modern name is given to the office itself. The ancient name for a Chancellor was "Referendarius." Amongst the Romans the "referendarius" presented requests or petitions to the prince, and declared on his part the answer to be given to them. Amongst the Franks, Gregory of Tours shows that the Referendarius held the ring of the king (lib. v. c. 3), and attached his subscription to letters (lib. x. c. 19), and there can be no doubt discharged the office of Chancellor. See Bignonius, *Not. in Marculf*, lib. i. p. 290. Bouquet, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. iv. p. 477, note (g). Ducange, in verb., *Referendarii* et *Referendarius*. Godwin, De Præsul. Ang. p. 207, and note g, (Cambridge, 1743). St. Swithin was in point of fact "keeper of the king's conscience." The title is

whilst Alstan, who considered it was not becoming in a monarch to neglect the affairs of this life, was constantly engaged in animating him to resist the Danes, whilst at the same time he took care that the Exchequer should be fully supplied with funds and the army properly organised. Those who peruse our annals, will find how many matters of this description were prudently devised, wisely commenced, and fortunately concluded by Bishop Alstan. He occupied the see of Sherborne for fifty years, happily, if in that long course of time he has been found engaged in good works. He was a man upon whom we would willingly bestow our meed of praise, had he not on one occasion yielded to a cupidity that is inherent in human nature, and usurped that which did not belong to him, by applying to his own purposes the monastery of Malmsbury. Even to this day is felt the wrong done by his injustice; for although upon his death an immediate remedy was afforded, and the place was long left unmolested, until of late, when it has again fallen into the same peril from which it was then rescued.* Thus it is that the accursed

---

retained by modern Chancellors. It might be hazardous to affirm that the duty is discharged by them, although none will dispute their right to such a title.

* "*Sentimus ad hunc diem impudentiæ illius calumniam,* licet locus idem statim eo mortuo, omnem illam eluctatus fuerit violentiam *usque ad nostrum tempus, quando in idem discrimen recidit.*" Malmsbury in this passage refers to the seizure and unjust occupation of his monastery by the bishop of Salisbury in the year 1118; (See Hardy's note (3) to W. Malmsbury, vol. i. p. 151), but it is unfortunately equally applicable to the present moment, when the lands and revenues that belonged to the monastery of Malmsbury are no longer applicable to the purposes of the poor, and when the mass of literature that was collected within its walls is destroyed or irrecoverably dispersed. For some particulars re-

thirst of avarice absorbs the hearts of mankind; and so it is that it eventually thrusts even into the lowest pits of hell men who might, if free from such a vice, be regarded as alike splendid and illustrious.*

We have now come to that period in our history in which it is necessary for us to state the details of that most awful and horrible plague, which for our sins was suffered by our country—the affliction that was imposed on every man of the English race by the Danes, and the cause of which it may be permitted us to intimate to the reader, as a warning to posterity.† Of all the afflictions (caused by invasions) this was more cruel, this far more unsparing than the rest.‡ The Romans had in a brief space of time effected the conquest of Britain, but then they endowed it with the laws of the Conqueror, and administered its affairs with glory to themselves. Next, the Scots and the Picts had by their frequent irruptions greatly harassed the

---

specting the monastery and library of Malmsbury, see vol. i. p. 520, of this work.

"Without the least design," it is said by a Protestant clergyman, "of vindicating the institutions of monachism, or overlooking the abuses incident to it, we may assert that, in Malmsbury's time, *religious houses were the grand depositaries of knowledge, and monks the best informed men of the age.*". The History of William of Malmsbury, translated by the Rev. John Sharpe, B.A., Preface, p. xvii.

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 108.

† Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 280.

‡ H. Hunt. lib. v. Prolog. p. 347. "Hæc siquidem longe immanior, longe crudelior cæteris fuit."

northern parts of Britain; but still neither were they capable of making attacks upon all parts of the island, nor when a signal and annihilative repulse was seasonably bestowed upon them, did they refrain from abandoning the country after a short-lived invasion. Next, the Saxons gained but a gradual possession of the land, and that but in accordance with their strength; and though they did conquer it by the sword, yet having conquered it they held it, and holding it they improved and built upon it; and having so improved and built upon it, they governed it by fixed laws. Even the Normans, who so rapidly and in such a short space of time gained possession of the country and made it subject to their power, not only permitted the conquered to live and to retain their liberty, but conceded to them the privilege of being governed by their ancient laws. The Danes, on the contrary, untiringly assailed the country on all sides and from all quarters. Their incursions were unceasing, their attacks unrelaxing, as what they wished for was not to hold possession of the land, but to rob it, and what they desired was to destroy that which they had not the ambition to govern. To defeat such invaders as these was scarcely an advantage to the victors, because they found as the result of all their toil and dangers they had to proceed elsewhere, to encounter a larger fleet, and a more numerous army of foes. It seemed almost miraculous how and whence those different bands arrived. Sometimes, when the kings of the English were marching at the head of their soldiers, for the purpose of repulsing the enemy from the eastern coast, and long before they could approach the aggressors, a messenger might be seen hurrying towards them, and thus addressing them,—"Whither is it, that

"your Majesty is directing your military strength? An "immense fleet of the Pagans has disembarked its forces "on the southern coast of England; and already the in- "vaders are laying waste the towns and villages, and all "are perishing by fire or the sword." The same day, perhaps, another messenger would be found exclaiming:— "To what place is your Majesty flying? A terrible army "has landed on the western coast of England, which if "you do not hasten to meet, it will be supposed you are "afraid to encounter, and are retreating before it, whilst "it hotly pursues you with conflagration and carnage." Upon the same day, or, not improbably, the following, a third messenger might be heard thus appealing to the great men of the kingdom:—"Whither, noble Ealdormen, "are you hastening? The Danes have reached thenorth- "ern shores—already are your mansions burned to the "ground, your treasures carried off, your sons tossed from "spear-top to spear-top by the Danes,* your wives ren-

---

* "Jam pueros sursum jactatos lancearum acumine susceperunt." H. HUNT., p. 347.

"Parvuli a matrum uberibus avulsi, aut lanceis excipiuntur, aut superacto carro minutatim conteruntur."—ROGER DE HOVEDEN, *Annal.* p. 431.

"Super omnia in minorem ætatem crudelitas desævit; dum parvuli a matrum uberibus evulsi aut lanceis excipirentur, aut superacto plaustro minutatim conterentur."—OSBERN. Vit. S. Elphegi. *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 135.

"Olverus Barnakall celebris incola Norvegiæ validus fuit pirata, ille infantes ab unius hastæ mucrone in aliam projici, passus non est, *quod piratis tunc familiare erat;* ideoque Barnakall (infantum præsidium vel multos habens infantes) cognominatus est."—Bartholin, p. 457, as quoted in TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 455, note 29.

The miscreants by whom these barbarities were committed were, we need hardly add, Pagans. The infants, on whom they practised their diabolical cruelties, the children of Catholics. Is it not

"dered the victims of their vile passions, or carried off by "them to be their slaves."

---

strange that a modern author, in descanting upon the invasion of England by the Northmen in the ninth century, should declare it as his conviction that these child-murderers "*surpassed* the cognate Saxon people they were plundering and subduing in literature as much as in arms—that poetry, history, laws, *social institutions and usages*, many of the useful arts, and *all the elements of civilisation* and freedom were *existing among them in those ages in much greater vigour than among the Anglo Saxons themselves!*" LAING'S *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 13.

So strongly is Mr. Laing impressed with the superiority of the Northmen-pirates over the Anglo Saxons of this country at the time of the invasion, that he confidently affirms "the reader would almost ask *if the Anglo Saxons were not* THE BARBARIANS *of the two!*" (vol. i. p. 33.) But why is there this admiration for the Northmen who massacred children—and this contempt for the Anglo Saxons who heard mass, and went to confession, and worshipped God, and prayed for the intercession of the saints? Because the former were with all their cruelties, Pagans, and the latter simply Catholics.

"It was," according to Mr. Laing, "the human mind in a state of barbarous energy and action, with the vitality of freedom conquering the human mind in a state of slavish torpidity and *superstitious lethargy!*" (Vol. i. p. 15.)

Spearing infants is "conquering the human mind in a state of slavish torpidity!" and triturating their mangled remains beneath a heavy cart-wheel is, we suppose, to be pardoned, because demonstrative of "the human mind in a state of barbarous energy and action!"

It is lamentable to see at this time of day, and in this enlightened age, a noble work (as Mr. Laing's undoubtedly is) marred by these sad notions, which prove that what he deems to be "philosophy" and "liberalism" are nothing more than the sad remnants of *Gibbonism*.

Mr. Laing complains, or rather he affirms, that England at the time of the Danish invasion was "under the pressure of *superstition*," (vol. i. p. 6,) "under *Romish superstition* and *church influence*," (vol. i. p. 9,) "tamed down by the *church influence* and *superstition of four centuries* into a state of listless existence," (vol. i. p. 14,) and that the Anglo Saxons were "a people, *to judge from their history*, without national feeling, interests, or spirit, sunk in *abject superstition*," (vol. i. p. 33). Such are the statements of Mr. Laing,

Such were the baleful rumours of a still more dire reality, which filled the ears and cowed the heart, and abated the

---

and taking, as we are bound to do, that when Mr. Laing uses the term "superstition," "slavish superstition," and "abject superstition," he means to indicate, either in a polite manner or an eloquent style, that which its professors deem to be "the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Church," he will find, upon the perusal of the works of "the monkish historians," that the period which he has selected as that when it was most predominant in this country, is that period which these very historians select as an epoch when the passions of kings, the avarice of nobles, and the sins of the people had made them its assailants, its spoliators, or its unworthy members. The monks believed that the invasion of the Danes was the instrument of vengeance in the hands of Heaven, to chastise a nation which had proved itself unworthy of the graces which God has treasured up in His church. Mr. Laing believes that the invasion was a blessing to England, and that it had "a powerful moral influence," and this too "upon *the character, ideas*, and even forms of government and social arrangements of the whole of the English population in the subsequent generations." (Vol. i. p. 4).

We do not venture to affirm that in this assertion Mr. Laing is absolutely wrong; whilst at the same time we admit, that the most convincing historical proofs we can discover of the Danish "character" and "ideas" being exhibited by persons born in England, or acclimated descendants of the Danes, will be found in the following extracts from the records of the achievements of the Republican and Cromwellian army in Ireland during the seventeenth century.

"Sir William Parsons hath by late letters advised the governor to the burning of corn, and to put man, woman, and *child* to the sword; and Sir Adam Loftus hath written in the same strain."—Ormond's Letters, vol. ii. p. 350.

In 1642, it is stated of a modern Dane, named Monroe, "making a prey of cattle, and killing seven hundred country people, men, women, and *children*."—Carte, vol. i. p. 311.

Another Dane, Sir Arthur Loftus, finding the inhabitants of several villages had taken shelter from his soldiers on a hill, "invested the hill, set the furze on fire on all sides, where the people, being in considerable number, were all burned or killed, men, women, and *children*. I saw the bodies and furze still burning."—Castlehaven's Memoirs.

"*When a soldier was carrying about a poor babe on the end of his*

martial strength of king and people, during this most awful plague-like irruption of invaders. A conquest of the foe at such a period was a victory without a triumph. It brought no joy to the brave, and no hope of tranquillity for the present, and of security for the future, to the peaceful.

But why, it may be asked, did the justice of God fall with such an avenging and tremendous fury upon the English at that time?

The reason for it was this:—

In the primitive state of the church in England, religion shone with pure and brilliant light, so much so, that kings and queens, mighty nobles and prelates, wished, as we have already shewn, to pass their lives in the monastic state or as pilgrims.* In the course of time however every sense of virtue withered away in them,† so that it might

---

pike, he (Sir Charles Coote) was charged with saying that *he liked such frolics*."—Carte's Ormond, vol. i. p. 245. See O'Connell's *Memoir on Ireland*, vol. i. pp. 239, 240, 242, 253, 261. (Duffy's Edition.) O'Daly, The Geraldines, (translated by the Rev. C. P. Meehan), p. 83, part i. c. 13.

* "In primitiva Angliæ Ecclesia religio *clarissime splenduit*: ita ut reges et reginæ, duces et episcopi, *vel monachatum vel exilium*, ut præmonstravimus, appeterent."—H. Hunt.

† "Omnis virtus *in eis* emarcuit."—This appears to us to apply particularly to kings and nobles—to kings who, like Ethelbald, Ceolred, and Osred, defiled with their sacrilegious passions those consecrated to Heaven, or who, like the nobles of Northumbria, under the false pretence of upholding religion, brought disgrace upon it by the establishment of lay-monasteries. See letter of St. Boniface to King Ethelbald, pp. 600—603; and with respect to lay-monasteries, pp. 586, 587, in the first volume of this work. The conduct of Bishop Alstan, in seizing upon the monastery of Malmsbury, which is specially referred to by its great historian, proves, we trust, that his conduct was an exception to that which then characterized the prelacy of England.

be said they would not permit any nation to compare with their own in treachery and wickedness—a fact which is especially apparent in the history of the kings of Northumbria. But as their impiety is recorded in the annals of each succeeding monarch, so may we infer how each rank and class of men imitated them in deceit, and equalled them in the betrayal of their respective trusts. With them piety was scorned as if it were an infamy, and perfect innocence regarded as a crime to be punished with death.

At length the Almighty God sent against them swarm after swarm, the most cruel people on the face of the earth —those who spared neither sex, nor youth, nor age; for then came the Danes and the Goths, the Norwegians and the Swedes, the Vandals and the Frieslanders; who from the beginning of the reign of King Ethelwulf, until the arrival of the Normans under King William—that is for a space of two hundred and thirty years—wasted the country and "made the land desolate." These people too, from the proximity of Britain to France, became the instruments of vengeance in the hands of God, invaded that country, and punished with cruelty its people in proportion to their sins.*

With these explanatory observations, we resume that regular order of narrative we have hitherto observed.†

---

* Frequent proofs of the justice of these statements will be given in the following pages.

† H. Hunt. Hist. lib. v. Prolog. p. 346. "Sed jam ad historiæ ordinem his explanatis redeundum est."

In the year 837,* the Danes, with all the pomp and pride of war, landed from three and thirty ships at the port of Southampton. They were on the instant attacked by the Ealdorman Wlfward, who, having slaughtered several thousand of them in a pitched battle, compelled the remainder to save themselves by a speedy and disgraceful flight. In the course however of the same year, pagans of the same nation as those who had been previously de-

---

It will be perceived by the preceding translation from the Prologue of Henry of Huntingdon to the Fifth Book of his History, that he was aware that the piratical gangs by whom this country was so long infested, and who were generally designated as "Danes," were composed of various tribes of marauders from the northern nations of Europe. "They were composed," Sharon Turner observes, "of the nations who lived in the regions now known by the general appellations of Sweden and Norway, as well as the inhabitants of Zealand and Jutland."—(History of the Anglo Saxons, vol. i. p. 488). "The Anglo Saxons," it is remarked by Herr Lappenberg, "were accustomed to call them (the invaders) Danes, under which appellation the Frank, Eginhard, a contemporary of Egbert, comprised both Danes and Swedes; but Alfred, the grandson of Egbert, who had had personal intercourse with the leaders of the Northmen, excludes the Swedes from that denomination."—(England under the Anglo Saxon kings, vol. ii. pp. 10, 11). Dr. Lingard declares that these invaders came from "the peninsula of Jutland, the islands of the Baltic, and the shores of the Scandinavian continent."—(History of England, vol. i. p. 145. Ed. 1837). The reader therefore will bear in mind, that the monkish historians, under the general designation of Danes, refer to that extraordinary class of men whom necessity compelled to be thieves; whose piratical mode of maintaining themselves was considered to be no discredit amongst their own countrymen; and whose success, though accompanied by the most foul acts of cruelty, was regarded as an event contributing to the national glory, and was therefore so celebrated by the barbarous poets (the Scalds) of a pagan population.—See CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. pp. clxxvii. clxxviii. TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 452.

* *Sax. Chron.*

feated, again landed at Southampton, and laid waste the adjacent country.* Wlfward, the conqueror of the Danes in their first aggression, died soon after he had repulsed them,† and the Ealdorman Athelhelm, having heard of the second arrival of the Danes, proceeded with the men of Dorsetshire to encounter them—compelled them to take to flight, but rashly relying too much upon his own personal courage, advanced so far beyond his own soldiers, in pursuit of the enemy, that they turned upon and killed him.‡ The result was, that with the death of Athelhelm, the Danes became masters of the field;§ for in the fall of the general was included the destruction of his soldiers.‖.

In the course of the year following, (A. D. 838) the Ealdorman Herebert fought against the Danes at Mercsware,¶ but victory declared in favour of the invaders, and

---

* Rog. de Wend. vol. i. pp. 279, 280.

† "Victorque extitit, nec multo post vita decessit."—F. Wigorn. p. 581, ad an. 837.

‡ Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 280.

§ Sax. Chron. H. Hunt., lib. v. p. 347.

‖ "Ducem interimunt, sociosque cum eo."—Ethelwerd *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 3, p. 841.

¶ "The Marshlanders."—*Sax. Chron.* "Perhaps Romney-marsh, in Kent."—Coxe. (Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 281, note 1.) "In the Saxon times the inhabitants of this tract were called *Mercsware*, 'marshmen,' a name perfectly suiting the place." "At that time (the conquest by William I.) it (Romney) was very considerable, being divided into twelve wards, and having *five parish churches*, a *priory*, and *an hospital*." Camden's *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 321. (Gough.) See Alford, *Annal. Eccles. Anglican.* vol. iii. pp. 55, 56, § 5. The last named author is unable to guess what could be the temptation to the Northmen to visit Romney-marsh. It is unconsciously stated by Camden, when he mentions

he as well as his soldiers were slaughtered by them. The same year, an army of the Pagans traversed the eastern parts of England—Lindsey, East Anglia, and Kent, and their march was marked by the massacre of an immense multitude of persons.*

——

The see of Winchester became vacant in the year 838,† and Ethelwulf, warmly interested for St. Swithin, "his nurse," and "his tutor,"‡ (for so he was accustomed to call him) never ceased in his exertions until, with the assent of the clergy, he beheld Swithin dignified with the bishopric of Winchester, and consecrated by the then archbishop of Canterbury, Celnoth. The seed of good works which was joyfully cast upon the soil by the king,

---

that it feeds "great herds of cattle," (pecorum læto proventu.) ("Pecorum pabulis terrarum captures humus egregia."—W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 213.) Amongst other qualities by which the Northmen were distinguished was that of cattle-stealing. They called it a "strandhögg." It was by the slaughtered cattle they stole they victualled their ships. The progenitor of the Norman kings of England, Rolf Gangr, was banished from Norway; because not content with stealing cattle from strangers, on one occasion he stole them from his fellow subjects. See Snorro, *Konung Harald Harfager Saga*, c. 24, vol. i. pp. 99, 100. Laing's *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 244.

* H. Hunt., lib. v. p. 347. F. Wigorn, who also mentions that in this year (838) died Wiglaf, King of the Mercians. See Ingulphus *Hist.* p. 11. *Rer. Ang. Script.* vol. ii. p. 11. (Gale).

† See Alford *Annal. Eccles. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 55, ad an. 837, § 9, and 838, § 1. Baronius, *cum critic.* Pagi, vol. xiv. p. 237, § 11.

‡ "Altorem, Doctoremque."—W. Malmsb. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 242.

bore its suitable produce by means of the bishop, who urged on the performance by his sovereign of pious deeds, to which the impulse had been originally given by his own counsels. Swithin might be regarded as in himself the repository of every virtue, whilst cherishing and delighting in two beyond all the rest—that is in clemency and humility.*

After Easter (in the year 839) the Emperor of the Franks (Louis le debonnaire) received, as he was on his return to France, ambassadors from the King of the English, requesting that the Emperor would permit their sovereign to travel through France on his way to Rome, which he was desirous of visiting for the purpose of offer-

---

* W. MALMSB. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 242. This brief notice respecting St. Swithin is here introduced, because the time at which he was consecrated Bishop of Winchester has been disputed, and it has been even affirmed that he was not the immediate successor of Alstan. See *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. i. de S. Swithun comment. præv. c. 3, §§ 18, 28, pp. 325, 327.

In this year also took place the martyrdom of St. Frederick, Bishop of Utrecht, who is described by William of Malmsbury, as the nephew and disciple of the great St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany. "Nepotem et discipulum." Malmsbury states that he was put to death by order of the Empress Judith, and gives a most interesting description of the anxiety evinced by this holy martyr to save his murderers from the vengeance of his friends. See *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. pp. 197, 198. Later writers however maintain that St. Frederick was by birth a Freson; see BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. pp. 93, 94, 95; and as to his prophecies of the afflictions which Heaven would send upon the people for their sins, and their terrible realization by the Northmen or Danes, who in one place, Batenburg, destroyed fifty-five churches, and in another, Utrecht, did not leave a person of the male sex living; see *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. iv. c. 7, p. 461; and *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vi. p. 329.

ing up his prayers.* At the same time, the English king admonished the emperor that more than usual care should be bestowed by him upon the spiritual welfare of his subjects; for a vision which had been seen by a certain individual had filled with an exceeding great terror the minds of many persons in England. The vision, which it was desired the Emperor should meditate upon, was thus described to him:—

This was the vision which was seen by a certain religious priest of England, when his spirit was parted from the body, a short time after the commemoration of the nativity of our Lord.

On a certain night this same pious priest was asleep, when a man came to him, bid him arise, and follow where he (his visitor) should lead him. The unknown person then became his guide into a strange country, where he beheld a great number of most magnificent and variously constructed edifices. Amongst these the priest remarked

---

* Annales Bertiniani de Gestis Ludovici Pii Imp. ad an. 839. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vi. p. 201. This fact of an embassy to the Emperor Louis from Ethelwulf, and the pious object it had in view, as well as the religious warnings with which it was accompanied, seem strongly confirmatory of the passage in Wallingford, declaring that a dispute took place between the laity and clergy in England as to whether Ethelwulf, having been a subdeacon, could hold the temporal rank of a sovereign, and when by common consent the decision of the dispute was left to the Pope. "Misit autem regio ad Leonem Papam, *populi suggerens petitionem*; qui super eodem capitulo habito concilio, *populi et utilitate et voluntati assensit*, et a subdiaconatu ad regalem dignitatem virum prædictum redire *permisit*."—WALLINGFORD *Chron.* p. 532. We may remark, that the time of this embassy corresponds with that given in the Chronicle of Melrose, as the year of the accession of Ethelwulf. See Chron. Mailros. *Rer. Ang. Script.* vol. i. p. 142. (GALE).

a church, into which both he and his guide entered, and he there beheld a vast number of boys reading. The priest then asked if it were permitted to him to inquire who these boys were. The guide replied—"Ask what "thou wilt, and an answer shall be given to thee."

The priest then drew near to the boys, in order that he might see what they were reading. Upon looking into their books, he observed that each volume seemed to be written in alternate lines, in which all the letters in one line were of a blood-red colour, and all the letters in the other inscribed in black.

And when (it was observed by the priest) I asked my guide why there were in the books those blood-red lines, the guide thus replied to me:—

"The blood-red lines, which thou hast noticed in these "books, are the various sins perpetrated by men who are "Christians: because those precepts and commands which "are to be found in the Holy Scriptures they neither de-"sire to obey nor to fulfil. The boys however that thou "seest here, and who seem to thee to be engaged in reading, "are the spirits of the saints, who daily deplore the sins and "crimes of Christians, and who intercede for them, that "they may at length repent and be converted. And was "it not that these spirits of the saints so incessantly, by "their tears and prayers, cried out to God for mercy, there "should assuredly have been ere now a termination put to "the christian nations and their transgressions. Bear "thou in mind, that in the present year there was a great "shew of future fruits, both in the productions of the "earth, of the trees, and of the vines; but because of the "sins of mortals the greatest portion of them has perished,

"and has never been converted to the use of man. But "if Christians shall not speedily repent, and do penance "for their manifold vices and misdeeds, and shall not bet- "ter observe and more duly honour the Lord's Day, then "will there fall upon them a most tremendous and intol- "erable punishment. Even now there impendeth over "them and their land a most dark and dense cloud, which "shall cover them for three days and three nights; and "there is close upon them the invasion of pagan nations "borne to their shores in an immense number of ships; "and then the largest portion by far of the population and "the land of the Christians shall be wasted with fire and "sword. If however they now desire to do penance sin- "cerely, and endeavour, in accordance with God's com- "mand, to amend them of their sins in fasting, in prayers, "and in alms deeds, those punishments and perils may, "through the intercession of the saints, be avoided."*

——

This year (839) there was a great slaughter in London, Canterbury, and Rochester.† The accursed bands of the

---

* "Sed tamen, si adhuc veram pœnitentiam agere volunt, et peccata illorum juxta præceptum Domini *jejunio et oratione* atque *eleemosynis* emendare studuerint, tunc has pœnas et pericula per *intercessionem sanctorum* evadere poterunt."—*Annal. Bertian. Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vi. p. 201. The introduction of this extract from a foreign writer—most probably Prudentius, Bishop of Troyes, will, it is hoped, be pardoned, not only for its reference to this country, but to the old religious belief of Englishmen.

† *Sax. Chron.* See F. WIGORN, p. 581. The Chron. de

Danes having been able to penetrate to the interior of the country, put to death an immense multitude both of men and women.*

King Ethelwulf, in the year 840, fought at Charmouth against the warrior-crew, that had disembarked from thirty-five Danish ships.† The king, who had separated his army into several divisions, was thus engaged in a conflict with only a portion of the force that he ought to have had under his command, and the Danes were therefore victorious; for although the number of their ships was small, still the most of these were ships of war of the

---

Mailros and Ethelwerd place this event in the year 841; Rog. de Wendover and Asser in 842.

* Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 282. Under the date of the year 839, we find a letter between two abbots, an extract from which will shew how much and deeply interested in sacred and profane literature were the monks of the ninth century.

"Venerabili Altisigo Abbati, Lupus monasterii Bethlemitici, sive Ferrariensis, in Domino, salutem. * * * Atque ut quod polliceor vos exequamini, priores obire flagitio: ut quæstiones B. Hieronymi, quas teste Cassiodoro, in vetus et novum Testamentum elaboravit. *Bedæ* quoque *vestri* similiter quæstiones, in utrumque testamentum: Item memorati Hieronymi libros explanationum in Hieremiam, præter sex primos, qui apud nos reperiuntur cæteros qui sequuntur: Præterea Quintiliani institutionum Oratorium, lib. xii. per certissimos nuntios, mihi ad cellam S. Judoci, quæ tandem aliquando nobis reddita est, dirigatis tradendos Lantrano, qui bene vobis notus est; ibique exscribendos, vobisque quam potuerit fieri celerius remittendos. Quod si omnes non potueritis; at aliquos, non gravemini destinari: recepturi a Deo præmium impletæ charitatis."

These are the monks of whom it is still affirmed that they passed their lives in idleness and ignorance. See Alford, *Annal. Ecc. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 59, § 8; and with respect to the writer of this letter, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vi. pp. 401, 404. Baronius, *cum critic.* Pagi, vol. xiv. pp. 236, 380, 381, 384.

† *Sax. Chron.*

largest size, and capable each of conveying a great many fighting men.*

---

* "—— licet enim parvus fuisset numerus puppium, magnus tamen erat puppes maximas numerus ingressorum."—H HUNT. lib. v. p. 348. Mr. Laing supposes that "large vessels" amongst the Northmen were "vessels of twenty banks or upwards," and that "the size of the war-vessels was reckoned by the banks, or by the rooms between the banks of oars. Each room or space," being "the berth of eight men"—*Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 139. See Preliminary Dissertation, chap. iv. pp. 130, 140, where much valuable information may be found, with respect to the art of shipbuilding, as practised by the Northmen.

In this year, (840) the death of Louis "le debonnair," or "the pious," took place. We learn incidentally from his biographer (the astronomer) the manner in which he was accustomed to pass the season of Lent. "Scarcely," it is said, "had he commenced with his wife and his son the holy fast of Lent, than he was compelled to march against his enemy; and this pious Emperor, who had been accustomed to observe this epoch with the chanting of psalms, with constant prayers, with the celebration of masses, and an abundance of alms, and so making it all one mighty solemnity, that he would hardly ever allow himself the indulgence of riding for a day or two, even though the exercise was necessary for his health, was now forced, in the hope of being able to put an end to civil war, to abandon all thoughts of repose."

—— Et qui solitus erat hoc tempus psalmorum decantatione, orationum instantia, *Missarium celebratione*, eleemosynarum liberalitate, *totum reddere solemne*, et ut vix uno aut duobus diebus &c. —*Vita Ludovici Pii Imp.* c. 62.

The mode in which M. Guizot, (ex-minister of France) has translated this passage is a curious specimen of the manner in which a sectarian seems to suppose he is authorised to act, when dealing with an ancient Catholic author:—

"Et ce pieux empereur, qui avait coutume de solenniser cette epoque par le chant de psaumes, par le continuité des prières et la multitude des aumônes, de permettant à peine de monter, &c."—GUIZOT, *Collection des Memoires, relatifs a l'Histoire de France*, vol. iii. pp. 417, 418.

The reader will remark, that in the French translation, there is no reference either to the "Missarum celebratione," or the "totum reddere solemne" of the original.

We have the testimony of the historian Nithard, that during the reign of this Emperor, and whilst he was deposed by Lothair,

In the year 844, Readwulf,* who had succeeded to the throne of Northumbria upon the banishment of its former

---

that the people were oppressed and the church pillaged; but that he was restored to power on condition that he should guard the liberties of the one, and protect the free exercise of the other—a counter-revolution which was effected by the monks. "Res autem publica, quoniàm quisque cupiditate illectus sua quærebat, cotidie deterius ibat. Quamobrem tam Monachi, quos supra memoravimus, quam et ceteri, qui quod factum fuerat dolebant, illum percuntari cœperunt, si respublica eidem restitueretur, an eam pro viribus erigere ac fovere vellet; maximeque cultum divinum, quo omnis ordo tuetur ac regitur. Quod quia facile concessum, in restauratione ejus ocius consensum est."—NITHARD, *Hist.* lib. i. c. 3.

We mention these facts with respect to the Emperor Louis, because we find Florence of Worcester's History contains a lengthened notice respecting events in his reign; and the author having stated a curious incident respecting a Bishop of Orleans, gives this testimony as to a successor replying to the heresy then broached, with regard to the due veneration to be paid to the sign of the Cross. His words are these:—

"Dogmatizavit enim idem hereticus crucis dominicæ signum non oportere adorari, quod nisi adhibeatur frontibus nostris sive aquis quibus regeneramur, aut crismati quo linimur, aut sacrificio quo vegetamur, nihil rite perficitur. Sed ei memoratus episcopus Ionas, satis lucide catholiceque illo suo respondit libello. Floruit etiam usdem temporibus vir quidam Rabanus nomine, qui et ipse de laude crucis librum diversis schematibus decoratum metrice composuit."—F. WIGORN, ad an. 840, p. 581.

In the year 842 an incident occurred, the mere narration of which will serve to shew, that there was not that gross ignorance of astronomy which is generally supposed to have prevailed in the ninth century.

"Lotharius inopinato fratrum adventu territus cessit, sublatisque ab Aquisgrani Palatio tam sanctæ Mariæ quam regalibus thesauris, disco etiam miræ magnitudinis ac pulchritudinis argenteo, in quo et orbis totius descriptio, et astrorum consideratio, et varius planetarum discursus, divisis ab invicem spatiis signis eminentioribus sculpta radiabant, particulatim præciso, suisque distributo, &c."—Annal. Bertin. 842. PERTZ. *Monument. German. Histor.* vol. i. p. 438. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 61.

* ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 282.

king, Athelred, encountered the Pagans in battle. The result was disastrous, for both he and his general, Alfrid, and the most of his adherents, were slain on the field of battle—an event which led to the restoration of the former king, Athelred.*

In the year of our Lord 845, the Ealdorman Earnulf,

---

* "—— ipse et consul Alfredus ceciderunt cum parte maxima subditorum, et *tunc* iterum Athelredus regnavit."—Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 283. These words would bear the interpretation, that the exiled king had employed the Danes as allies to regain his kingdom, and we might perhaps infer, that they were rewarded with lands, as the Saxons had been by Vortigern. That Athelred had done something to render himself unpopular is certain, for he was afterwards put to death, most probably by his own subjects. See Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 283.

The time is uncertain when the Danes first established themselves in Northumbria. According to the "Heimskringla" of Snorro, it must have been long prior to the year 841, for we are told that there had been, previous to the reign of Halfdan the Black, a certain Ivar Vidfame, who had gained possession of a fifth part of England! "quinta Angliæ parte potiebatur."—Ynglinga Saga, c. 45. Snorro, vol. i, p. 52. A statement that is repudiated as absolutely untrue by Mr. Turner, *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. pp. 464, 465. As to the obscurity of the Northumbrian history about this period, see note 6, by Mr. Coxe, to Roger de Wendover, vol. i. p. 282. Bering, *Florius Daricus*, pp. 164, 176.

The descent upon England in the year 844 is thus referred to in the *Annales Bertiniani:*

"Nortmanni Britanniam insulam ea quam maxime parte, quam Angli-Saxones incolunt, bello impetentes, *triduo* pugnando victores effecti, prædas, rapinas, neces passim facientes, terra pro libitu ponuntur."—*Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 63; see also same vol. p. 152. Ex *Chron. de Gest. Nortmannorum in Francia*, ad an. 844, 846, 848.

Their atrocities at Nantes in the year 841 are deserving of particular notice: "Dani vero, qui remanserunt, in unum congregati, per mare Britannicum Ligerim ingressi, aggrediuntur Nannetem civitatem, et in sabbatho Paschæ *Episcopum fontibus benedicentem* trucidant, clerum et populum diversis cruciatibus occidendo."—Pontopiddan *Gesta Danorum*, vol. i. p. 213.

with the men of Somersetshire, and the Ealdorman Osric, with the men of Dorset, and Alstan, the bishop of Sherborne, fought against the Danes at the mouth of the river Parrot, (in Somersetshire) and by the destruction of their foes,* entitled themselves to claim a glorious victory.†

In the year 849,‡ there was born to Ethelwulf, King of the West Saxons, in Berkshire, in the royal villa, known as Wantage,§ a son. This son, in the holy sacrament of baptism, was named Alfred. His mother was Osburga, a woman not less remarkable for her unaffected piety, than for high rank and noble race, being the daughter of King Ethelwulf's illustrious butler, the Ealdorman Oslac.‖

---

* Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 283. See Sax. Chron. A.D. 845.

† "Et ex eis non modicum stragem dantes victoriæ palmam sunt adepti."—F. Wigorn, ad an. 845, p. 582. "Multos eorum prostraverunt, et victoriæ splendorem obtinuerunt."—H. Hunt. lib. v. p. 348. "Ast victores existunt, superato exercitu Danorum."—Ethelwerd, lib. iii. c. 3, p. 841.

Two years afterwards, the Northmen, according to Prudentius, rendered Scotland tributary to them, and gained possession of the islands adjacent to that country:—

"Scotti a Nortmannis *per annos plurimos* impetiti tributarii efficiuntur, insulis circumquaque positis *nullo resistente* potiti, immorantes."—*Annal. Bert.* 847. Pertz *Monument. German. Histor.* vol. i. p. 443. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 65. See Chronic Normannorum, Pertz, vol. i. p. 533, ann. 846.

‡ Asser. *Annal.* (Rer. Ang. Script.) vol. i. p. 142. Wallingford *Chron.* (Ibid.) vol. iii. p. 535, (Gale).

§ See Camden's Britannia, vol. i. pp. 212, 225.

‖ "Oslac famosi *pincernæ*."—Asser, Vit. Ælf. p. i. The duties of those filling this high office cannot possibly be more happily illustrated than by comparing it to that which is imposed upon the

In the same year, (849) and on the vigil of Pentecost, Berferth, son of Bertwulf, King of the Mercians, iniquitously put to death his own relation, St. Wistan, the descendant of two kings of Mercia;* for Wistan was the son of Wigmund, the son of King Wiglaf, by Elfleda, the daughter of King Ceolwulf.†

The Mercian king, Bertwulf, was the brother of Wiglaf, and like him reigned for thirteen years, a tributary to the Ethelwulf, King of the West Saxons. Bertwulf was however most unlike to his brother, King Wiglaf, both in morals, in disposition, in reverence for the saints, and in regard for the monastery of Croyland. He was an assenting party to the crime of his son, Berferth, when that person impiously and cruelly shed the blood of his cousin, Wistan. Such are the crimes which an ambition for the crown and the desire to govern others will impel men to perpetrate!‡

From his earliest childhood, Wistan had manifested an excellent disposition, and in his youth he proved, by his

---

rich, who should but taste of their wealth before they bestowed it upon the poor. Such at least seemed to be the feeling of the Catholic priest and poet Fortunatus, when he thus wrote:

"Dives pauperi propinavit, et, ut ita dixerim, quasi Falerni nobilis ipso me prius odore *pincernante*, supplevit."—FORTUNATUS, lib. v. Poëm in Epist. ad Martinum, Episc. Gallic. See DUCANGE in verb. *pincerna*. PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. ii. p. cccxlvi. ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 284. ASSER. Vit. Ælf. p. i. F. WIGORN, p. 582.

* ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 284.

† F. WIGORN, ad an. 850, p. 582.

‡ INGULPHUS, *Hist.* p. 11. (GALE).

good conduct, how sincere and how perfect was his piety.* Upon the death of his father, to whom he should have succeeded in power, he entrusted the government of his principality to his mother and the nobles; for he took our Lord as his example: he scorned the kingdoms of this world, and preferred a throne in heaven to the fragile sceptre of a perishable monarchy.

At this period of time, Berferth determined to fill that position which Wistan had a right to occupy, and he resolved, either whilst Wistan was living to gain possession of it, or if dead to inherit it as Wistan's legal successor. This project Berferth made up his mind to carry into effect, either by fair means or by foul.

The heart of Berferth was inflamed with two passions—the ambition of reigning as a king; the desire of being united in marriage with the queen, the mother of Wistan; for he fancied that such a marriage must facilitate him in his ascent to the throne—that with the queen as his wife he could hold the reins of government, and, possessed of the power of a sovereign, the title could not long be refused to him.

In pursuance of this plan, he sent messengers to demand the queen in marriage. She, who was utterly unconscious of the perfidious plot that was concocted, deferred sending an answer until she had consulted with her son and the nobles of the land.

When the opinion of St. Wistan respecting the proposed marriage was asked, he (who seemed to be instructed by

---

* Capgrave, *Nova Legenda Angliæ*, p. cccxv, a. *Act. Sanct.* (Jun.) vol. i. p. 86.

the spirit of grace and wisdom) is reported to have given this answer:—

"My dearest mother, bear in mind that Berferth, who "now seeks you as a wife, is both my cousin and your "gossip,*—that he who received me at the sacred font of "baptism, was as my father to a new generation unto life. "Attend but to my counsels, and you shall be given to a "husband that will never die; for those who marry them-"selves unto Christ, and accept Him as their bridegroom, "shall receive as their dowry a glorious principality in the "kingdom of Heaven."

"Let it be as you have said, my son," replied the queen; "I will never wed Berferth, nor any mortal "man."

Wistan, assured by this answer of his mother's constancy that she would pass her days in virtuous widowhood, revealed to the messengers of Berferth the canonical impediments to any marriage between that prince and the queen.

As soon as Berferth received this message, he resolved upon compassing the death of Wistan; and all his thoughts were occupied upon the devising the means by which that most foul and wicked purpose might be carried into effect.

Incensed with the fury of a tyrant, the crime of treason had no terrors for him. His thoughts were full of treachery, when his words were those of peace, in suppli-

---

* Upon such circumstances as impediments to marriage, see *Cavallarius Institutione Canonici*, pars i. c. 5, § 4, c. 21, § 10, vol. i. pp. 200, 269. A striking illustration of the rigid manner in which it was enforced in the sixth century will be found in Bouquet, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. ii. p. 561.

cating for an interview with the young prince, to which he only invited his victim for the purpose of basely destroying him.

The request of Berferth for an interview was immediately acceded to by Wistan, and both parties met at a place which to this day is still called "Wistanstow." Here Berferth considered in what manner he should be able to put the prince to death, and yet escape the danger of a tumult, to which such an event was likely to give rise. He saw that it would be perilous to himself to commit such a crime in the presence of the multitude who had accompanied the prince. At the same time, it appeared that it would be easy to disperse the armed guards of Wistan, once his death should have deprived them of a leader. He and his followers therefore privately provided themselves with arms, and advanced to meet those who were without weapons and defenceless.

As soon as the leading persons on both sides constituted but one group, Berferth took the young prince a short distance from his friends, and begged that he might be allowed to embrace him as his god-son. "Approach my "son," said he, "and bestow upon me the kiss of peace." Wistan, who had ever been a lover of peace, walked towards him, saying; "In the name of Holy Peace, that "which is God Himself, I kiss thee, so that in His name "I may be kissed by thee." Berferth, who had at that moment no respect for an earthly sovereign, and no fear of the King of Heaven, stealthily drew forth his sword, whilst Wistan was in the act of embracing him, and striking with the sword-hilt the young prince on the top of the head, he shattered the skull to pieces; whilst one of his confederates at the same instant ran the royal

victim through the body.* Those who had accompanied the king, Jubald Man, and Edulph, (because it was feared, they would, as attached to the king, and as assertors of the integrity of the blessed martyr, vindicate his memory,) were put to death also by the detestable ministers of Berferth.

As to Berferth himself, the moment the crime was committed, the judgment of Heaven fell upon him. He was seized on the spot with a raging madness, so that it was neither permitted to him, by God, to be married to the queen, as he had desired, nor to be ever elevated to that throne which he had coveted.

St. Wistan suffered martyrdom on 1st June (849), and abandoning his relics to this earth, his glorious spirit rose to heaven. From that spot however, on which he, in his innocence suffered death, there arose a column of light, which seemed to reach up to the sky, and that for the space of thirty days was plainly seen by all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.†

Our pages shall not, at least, be without thy praises, oh! blessed youth, saint Wistan;‡ we will not be silent with regard to thee, whom thy cousin Berferth put to death. Posterity shall know (should they deem these pages worthy of their perusal,) that never was there in this world, a disposition more deserving of admiration than

---

* An occurrence somewhat similar to this, and finally as fatal befel Charles the son of Charles the Bald.—See *Annales Bert.* ad an. 864, and *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 238. *note. e.*

† CAPGRAVE, *Nova Legenda Angliæ*, p. cccxv. a. b. *Act. Sanct.* (Jun.) vol. i., p. 86, §§ 1, 2, 3, BROMTON *Chron.* p. 778.

‡ "Nec vacabunt laude tua paginæ nostræ, felix puer Wistane." W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 212.

thine—that it provoked against thee the hand of a hateful assassin; that no purity in the sight of God could be more stainless than thy innocence, and that because of such purity, He who sees into all hearts did visit thee with honor, sending down from heaven an all-illuminating column of light, which, penetrating the obscurities of the dense, dark night, exposed and made bright as day the gloomiest cavern in which crime had concealed itself, and thus convicted thy murderer in the midst of his iniquity. Because of this (miracle) thy venerated relics were removed by thy relatives to Repton,* a famous mo-

---

* "Quapropter venerandæ reliquæ." W. Malmsb. "This saint's body * * * was afterwards translated to the abbey of Evesham; where he was honoured as a saint and martyr *till the time of King Henry VIII.* Walter, the *Norman* abbot of Evesham, in the days of the Conqueror, doubting of Wistan's sanctity, put his relics to a fiery trial, but was not a little terrified, when he found the fire did not touch them, nor even so much as sully or alter the colour of them."—*Britannia Sancta*, vol. i. p. 336. This miracle is also stated by Capgrave, who adds, "Quo viso omnes Dei laudantes magnalia, voces ad sidera tollunt, et caput cum cæteris membris in feretrum honorifice reponunt." See *Act. Sanct.* (Jun.) vol. i. p. 87, § 5. Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vi. p. 717. Alford *Annal. Eccles. Ang.* vol. iii. pp. 67, 68, § § 5, 6. The last abbot of Evesham was a man named Philip Hawford, alias Ballard, who surrendered his monastery in 1539, to Henry VIII. for a pension of £240 a year to himself, and is supposed, in lieu of his pension, to have been afterwards made Dean of Worcester. Of this unfaithful steward, Bishop Latimer thus wrote to the Lord Cromwell:—

"Verelye he seemyth to me a verye cyvyll and honeste man; and *won* (one) *that puttyth all hys truste in your good lordshype*, that of your goodnesse, as you have begoon with hym, and made hym, soo you wyll contynew good lord unto hym to the maynteynynge of hym in hys ryght of such thyngs which he hath obtayned by your only goodnesse. *Thus God contynew you amonge us to doo many men good.*" See Sir H Ellis's Letters, illustrative of English History, 3rd series, vol. iii. pp. 249, 250. See B.

nastery in thy time, but now the villa of the Earl of Chester; for through the lapse of years it has decayed, and its glory departed. At present thou (in thy relics) art to be found at Evesham—thou, worthy of honour, thou ever kindly, ever beneficently attentive to the pious prayers of those who seek thy intercession!*

In the year 851, and the third year of the life of Alfred,† Ceorl, the ealdorman of Devonshire, with the military of his province, fought against the pagan Northmen or Danes at a place, which is called Wembury.‡ In that battle the Christians were victorious.

WILLIS's View of the Mitred Abbeys (Evesham) in LELAND's *Collectaneana*, vol. vi. pp. 163, 164. As to St. Wistan, see also vol. i. pp. 145, 212; vol. ii. p. 264.

* "Nunc Eveshamum inhabitas dignus qui faventium votis serenus indulgeas." W. MALSMB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 212. These and other expressions, respecting St. Wistan, will be found repeated by the same author: *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. iv. p. 284.

To an Englishman it must be a matter of interest to know, that in this year (849) the remains of the empress St. Helena were transferred from Rome to the diocese of Rheims, when her sanctity was testified by many miracles. See FLODOARDUS' *Histor. Rhemens.*, lib. ii. c. 8. *Chron.* SIGEBERT *Gemblac*, ad an. 848. NOTCHER Abb. Altivillar, de veritate reliquiar. S. HELEN. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. pp. 249, 380. BARONIUS cum critic. PAGI, vol. xiv. p. 373, § 5. BUTLER's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. viii. p. 282.

† ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 2.

‡ "Wugan-beorche," *Sax. Chron.* "Wicgan-beorg." ASSER, "Wienorne." H. HUNT. "Wincanbeorg." *Chron. Mailros.* See TURNER's History of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. p. 490, and CAMDEN's *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 48. (Gough.)

It was in this year, that for the first time, the Pagans took up their winter quarters in an island—*Scheapieg* (Sheppey)—"the island of sheep." This island is in the river Thames, between Essex and Kent, but nearer to Kent than to Essex, and upon it has been constructed a most magnificent monastery.*

In the same year a mighty army of Pagans, conveyed to this country in not less than three hundred and fifty ships, arrived at the mouth of the Thames.† The crews of these vessels landed and took the cities of Canterbury and London by storm,‡ and then being encountered by Bertwulf, king of the Mercians, who with his entire army had endeavoured to stop their devastating progress, they put both him and them to flight.§ Bertwulf, it is to be observed, was a great despoiler of monasteries, and when he was marching through Croyland, he took from the monastery all that his brother Wiglaf and the Mercian kings had generously bestowed upon it—a vast number of jewels and rich ornaments, which had been given for the greater decoration of the church. Bertwulf most wickedly laid hold of these, as well as of all the money he could

---

* "Minstre in Shepey was founded A.D. 675, *destroyed by the Danes*, rebuilt by William Corboil, *Archbishop of Canterbury*, 1130, *who placed in it Benedictine nuns*. It was valued at £122. per annum, granted first to the Cheneys, (by Henry VIII.) then to the Hobys," (Tanner, p. 208,) "since bought by Sir John Haywood, who vsted it in trustees for charitable uses." CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 340. See pp. 312, 346. The settlement of the Danes in Sheppey is placed by the Saxon Chronicle in the year 854.

† ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 2.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*

§ ASSER, p. 2.

find in the monastery, and then advanced with his army against the Danes, whilst they were carrying on their ravages in the neighbourhood. By these Danes Bertwulf was defeated and put to flight,* and never again prospered in this life.†

This victory rendered the Pagans more audacious than they had previously been; for combining all their forces together, they proceeded in a body into Surrey. As soon as the line of march they had taken had been ascertained by the West Saxon king Ethelwulf, he mustered a large army, and with his son Athelbald, came in conflict with the enemy, at a place named Ockley.‡ The battle was long, sharply and courageously contested.§ There, might warriors be seen rushing amid the serried ranks, as reapers into the harvest field, whilst limbs, and heads fell fast before them, and the gushing human gore swelled into rivers of blood. To recount the single deeds of each hero would be a vain task; for it would soon become tiresome, by its sameness and seeming prolixity.‖ God bestowed

---

* INGULPHUS, *Hist.* p. 11. The same author states, that Bertwulf subsequently made restitution to Croyland, and gives a copy of a charter, the authenticity of which is impeached by Sir Francis Palgrave. See Ingulphus, pp. 12, 13, 14, 15. *Rise and Progress of English Commonwealth*, vol. ii. p. cccxlvi.

† "Qui nunquam postea viguit." H. HUNT. lib. v. p. 348.

‡ ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 285. See CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. pp. 242, 251.

§ ASSER.

‖ "Videres igitur viros bellatores more segetis utrinque ruere; sanguinisque fluvios capita, et membra cæsorum secum voluere. Scribere autem singula nonne nimiæ et fastidiosæ prolixitatis esset." H. HUNT.

the blessing of victory upon those believing in Him, and inflicted a tremendous punishment upon such as contemned His commands.* Nearly the entire force of the Pagans was exterminated, and the multitude of them killed was so great that never in any one day, nor in any other place, either before or since, has there been heard of so many of them being put to death.† Ethelwulf, the victor in this battle, was justly hailed as a most glorious conqueror.‡

In the same year Athelstan, king of Kent, § and the Ealdorman Ealhere engaged in a sea fight against the Danes at Sandwich. They slaughtered an immense number of the enemy, captured nine of their ships, and compelled the remainder to save themselves by flight.‖

---

* H. Hunt. lib. v. p. 348.

† "Ita qualiter nunquam in aliqua regione, in una die ante, nec post ex eis occisam esse audivimus." Asser, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 2.
"And thaet maest wael geslogon on hæthenum herige. The we secgan hyrdon on thysne andweardan dæg." *Sax. Chron.*
"Pars Britanniam Insulam Angliosque impetentes, ab eis auxilio Domini nostri Jesu Christi superantur." *Annala Bertin.* ad an. 850.

‡ "Rex igitur Edelwlfus victor extitit clarissimus." H. Hunt. See W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 109.

§ Athelstan "frater Athelwlfi." *Chron. Mailros,* ad an. 851, p. 17, (Ed. Bannatyne Club.)

‖ "Edelstan Rex Cantiæ et dux Ealhere *navali prælio* contra Dacos pugnaverunt."—H. Hunt.
It is naively remarked, as to these facts, by a modern historian:—
"This, by the description, must be a sea engagement."—Collier's *Ecclesiastical History,* vol. i. p. 367.

This year then could not be but regarded as one particularly fortunate for the people of England.*

---

* H. Hunt. lib. v. p. 348. See Asser, *Annal*, p. 155; *Vit. Ælf.* p. 2. F. Wigorn, p. 582, which is copied verbatim from Asser. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 142. Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 285.

Such were the events of the year 851 in England, and this their result under the conduct of a king, who had been a monk. And yet it is said, by a modern, and for many reasons, a deservedly popular historian, that at this very period of time, the men of England who thus bravely repulsed the Danes, and whose best politician was a bishop, were "a people, *to judge from their history*, without *national feelings, interests, or spirits, sunk in abject superstition.*" Laing's *Chronicle of the Norway Kings*, vol. i. p. 33.

The facts we have cited refute the assertion; but we may remark, that the very period of time, which Mr. Laing selects as that in which there was too much of the Catholic religion, is the same period in which the monkish historians declare, that the avarice of kings and nobles had been injurious to religion, that their evil example had contaminated the population, and that the sins and crimes of both brought down upon various nations in Europe, the worst of all visitations—the invasions of the impious and remorseless Northmen. There are facts to justify them in entertaining that opinion, for wherever kings and nations were pious, they successfully resisted the first invaders; but where they were the impious despoilers of church property, they were defeated by the Northmen. In England, we have the example of the pious Ethelwulf, hailed as "a most glorious conqueror" over the Danes; whilst the Mercian King Bertwulf—he who acted like a fitting predecessor for Henry VIII.—(omnia "jocalia" una cum tota pecunia, quam in monasterio invenire potuit, sceleratissime diripuit)—was shamefully defeated by these invaders. Northumbria suffered most of all from the Danes. Northumbria was overspread with *lay* monasteries. (See Lingard's *Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 190—193. Ed. 1806.

The manner in which monasteries were harassed by nobles in France is indicated in the following extract from annals held in the reign of Louis le debonnair.

"Voluerunt insuper, concordante illustrissimo Ludovico, ut

A witan for deliberating and determining with regard to the general weal of the kingdom, was held at Kingesbyry,

---

monachi suis Monasteriis, quæ villis, castris, burgis, et civitalibus habent, absque conturbatione maneant laicorum; statueruntque Episcopi, concordante domino Papa, ut Monachi a gravi opere et labore propter honestatem sacerdotii cessent, et loco laboris ad horas psalmos quosdam nominatos, pro vivis et defunctis fidelibus cantent cum orationibus ordinatis.

"*De libertate domorum canonicorum.*

"His temporibus Ludovicus Pius concessit canonicis, concordante Domino Papa, habere in domibus libertatem, et judiciariam potestatem: et voluit ipsos vestiri griseis et variis, quia adeo crescebat Ecclesia in Galliis, quod Reges, Duces, et Barones habebant filios et fratres, et avunculos in Ecclesiis Canonicorum et Monasteriis Monachorum, et se supponebant obedientiæ humilium fortiores." *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol vi. p. 446. (Fragmentum Historium.)

The affliction of France is, in the council of Meaux (Meldense Concilium, Labbæus, Concil. vol. vii. p. 1819, et sequent.) attributed to the same cause, or to use the words of the council—"quia contra omnem auctoritatem, contra Patrum decreta, et totius Christianæ religionis consuetudinem, *in monasteriis regularibus laici* in medio sacerdotum et levitarum, ac ceterorum religiosorum ut domini ac magistri resideant, et velut Abbates de, illorum vita et conversatione decernant, eosque dijudicent &c." c. 10. (See also c. 15, about the spoliation of church property by laymen, and the confiscation by laymen of the pious foundations of the Irish "hospitalia Scotorum," c. 40.) See BARONIUS *cum critic Pagi*, vol. xiv. pp. 315 to 325, 329, 330, 379, and in the same page 379, § 7, it will be found that the defeat of the Northmen in Spain is attributed to the piety of the sovereign.—"Ramirus Rex in Hispania ipsum suum regnum fecit pensione, tributi esse vectigale Ecclesiæ Sancti Jacobi, retulit gloriosum triumphum."

See also on this point ALFORD *Annal. Eccl. Ang.* vol. iii. pp. 63, 65, 69, 76. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vi. pp. 119, 164, 198, 354.

These victories of Ethelwulf are manifestly referred to by Lupus, Abbot of Ferrieres, in a letter addressed to the monarch, which commences thus:—

"Quoniam regiminis vestri opinionem bonam cognovimus; et vires vobis a Deo collatas, contra inimicos Christi audivimus,

on Friday in Easter week, in the year 851.* At this witan, it pleased Almighty God, that there should be worked a mighty miracle to the honor of the most holy confessor St. Guthlac, by means of which, the devotion towards Croyland which about this time had, in no slight degree, abated, should be revived, and thenceforth daily magnified in strength at all places, and in all provinces.†

During the course of this year all England had been afflicted by a disease which affected the sufferers, as if they were labouring under a paralysis—causing their limbs to tremble, with the shivering pains induced by the harsh severity of a winter's extreme cold, from which no species of covering, however warm or close, could protect the patient. This disease, of which the only premonitory symptom was an intolerable pain in the limbs that were about to be attacked, was most generally felt in the

---

Omnipotentem Deum, qui easdem vires tribuit, precamur; ut contra omnes Christiani nominis hostes, vos insuperabiles faciat, qui potestate sua incomprehensibile; sed tamen justa, omnia semper dispensat." The object of this letter was to obtain from the English monarch lead to cover a new chapel, consecrated by Lupus, "in honor of St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles" —"in honore Sancti Petri, et omnium cæterorum Apostolorum." His reason for applying to Ethelwulf is explained by Lupus, in a letter to a brother monk—an Englishman—because he had often heard that monk speak in the praise of the generosity of Ethelwulf.—"Siquidem recordatur, quantæ illum liberalitatis prædicaveritis." See ALFORD. *Annal. Eccl. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 60. §§ 6, 8.

* Cum ergo unanimi consensu totius præsentis consilii hic apud Kyngesbury anno Incarnationis Christi Domini octingentesimo quinquagesimo primo, feria sexta, in hebdomada paschæ, pro regni negotiis congregati."—INGULPHUS, *Hist.* p. 15. See SPELMAN'S *Concilia*, vol. i. pp. 344, 347. LABBEUS, vol. viii. pp. 73, 76.

† INGULPHUS, *Hist.* p. 16.

hands and arms, withering them up, and rendering them absolutely useless. It was one that prevailed amongst all classes and both sexes; and it so happened, that at this very witan, there were several both of the great, and the humble, who were suffering from the prevailing malady.

Upon the assembling of this witan, subjects relating to the temporal affairs of the kingdom were about to be submitted to them, when Ceolnoth, the then Archbishop of Canterbury,* (who was suffering from the disease) proposed that matters affecting religion should be first considered, so that these being disposed of, the grace and mercy of Christ might afterwards be manifested, in giving a prosperous issue, to what concerned them merely as citizens.†

---

* One fact respecting Ceolnoth will prove that he was a truly good "Catholic" Archbishop of Canterbury.—"Celnodus Archiepiscopus, qui a Principe nomine Heled villam, quæ dicitur Chert, *propriâ pecuniâ emit*, et Christi Ecclesiæ *dedit*." Dies Obitulares Arch. Cantuar. *Ang. Suc.* vol. i. p. 53. See also p. 98, same vol. and vol. ii. pp. 27, 681.

† "Et sic humana negotia, Christi suffragante gratia, finem prosperum posse sortiri." INGULPHUS.

"The members of the witenagemot were the "Pares Curiæ," of the state. The charters which the sovereign gave, were given in their presence and with their concurrence, as attested by their subscriptions. They decided controversies among crown vassals, and indeed, among all classes of the community. *They annulled the royal edict when contrary to law and justice.* They possessed, concurrently with the shire and hundred courts, a jurisdiction in all matters of civil, criminal, and fiscal regulation; but they also exercised an appellate jurisdiction over these; and finally, an original jurisdiction which transcended all others. Legislation was but a small branch of the duties of the witenagemot. The people were *then* too wise to demand new laws for the novelty's sake, and too well satisfied with their birthright to abandon it." ANSTEY'S *Guide to*

This proposition was unanimously assented to; and then there arose a general enquiry for Siward, the Abbot of Croyland;* because he had been for many years esteemed, both on account of his great eloquence, and his exalted sanctity, as the most fitting and pleasing promoter and advocate in multitudinous matters, for the entire body of the clergy, in all their councils and synods. An humble epistle from him and delivered by his brother monk, Askill, was read to the witan, in which he prayed that his great age would be regarded as a sufficient excuse for his absence. This circumstance reminded the King Bertwulf, of the serious complaint which the church of Croyland must have to prefer against him. He voluntarily and openly then declared, that he alike foolishly and wickedly had repeatedly done injury to the Abbot Siward, and wrong to his monastery at Croyland, and therefore required that the witan should pronounce its doom as to what reparation ought to be made by him.

This cause was then proposed to be heard in regular form. The petition of the Abbot Siward was presented by the aforesaid monk, Askill. It was handed round amongst the prelates and earldormen of the witan, and whilst the minds of all were busily engaged in mutual consultations respecting it, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Ceolnoth, in a loud voice, cried out, that he had that moment been restored to health; that he had been cured from the disease with which he had been affected,

---

the History of the Laws and Constitutions of England, p. 130. See also SIR F. PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. pp. 634 to 639, vol. ii. pp. cxxii. cccIxxxv. cccIxxxvii. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*. Glossary.

* See vol. i. pp. 740, 745, 746, of this work.

through the merits of St. Guthlac, upon the affairs of whose monastery they were then discussing. His words were repeated by others—a great many, and those the most exalted at the witan. Bishops as well as earldormen and earls, affected by the same disease, declared that they at the same time, through the mercy of God, and the merits of the most sanctified Guthlac, had been freed from all the pains, with which till then their limbs had been afflicted, and all who were so cured, bound themselves by vows, to make as speedily as they possibly could, a pilgrimage to the sacred tomb of St. Guthlac.

King Bertwulf, influenced by these events, directed the Bishop of London, a prelate who was not only remarkable for the excellence of his skill as a notary,* but also for the

* "Conveyances of land as employed amongst the Teutonic nations settled upon Roman ground, were almost exclusively prepared by the clergy; and as the clergy constituted but one body throughout all Christendom, a general uniformity of style was soon introduced. All the monks of Latin Europe were virtually bred in the same college. The members of the church were constantly in migration from province to kingdom; and a good precedent carefully settled at Monte Casino, was rapidly transmitted to the "Scriptorium," at Worcester, or at Canterbury. PALGRAVE's *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. ii. p. cciv. In the charter, professed to have been passed in this witan, Sir F. Palgrave, (pp. ccxiii, ccxiv), alleges strong reasons for believing it to be a "spurious or adulterated paraphrase." In p. cccxlvi, he says, however, that "the *signatures* were probably transferred from an authentic document." If such be the case, they are evidences that a miracle like to that described in the text occurred. For instance this is the manner in which the Bishop of London subscribes his name:—"Ego Swithulphus Londoniensis Episcopus, *in meipso* expertus gratiam Dei, et sanctissimi confessoris sui Guthlaci, humili devotione ad jussionem domini mei Regis istud chirographum *dictavi*, et inter ceteros dominos episcopos in ordine meo subscripsi." As to the *Notarii Episcoporum*, see DUCANGE. The following extract, as to the "Notarii Apostolici," is interesting to the people of this country.

beauty of his style, as an original writer, (and who had been amongst those miraculously cured), to take in hand the charter of Croyland, and thus as notary, to compose and write out an instrument such as the witan should approve of, in honor of St. Guthlac, by whom he had been cured. It was so done; and in the subscriptions to this regal charter,* it may be seen that the archbishop of Canterbury, confesses that he was "cured and restored to health;" St. Swithin, the Bishop of Winchester, that "he rejoices in the miracles of the Lord;" Alstan, Bishop of Sherborne, and Orkenwald, Bishop of Litchfield, that they delight in "the progress of religion;" and Rethun, Bishop of Leicester, promises that, "as long as he lived, he would be the devoted servant of Saint Guthlac."†

All the great men of the witan, influenced by the example of the royal munificence, imitated it, by affording proofs of their devotion to St. Guthlac.

Continually then from that time forth, did all affected by the prevailing malady, betake themselves to the sacred shrine of Saint Guthlac, and there with due devotion, im-

---

"Notarius vel Tabellio ab Imperatore vel Papa, vel ab eo cui hoc speciali privilegio indultum erat, ordinatus, posset ubique, etiam in Francia vel Anglia, seu Hispania, non solum in terris eis specialiter subjectis, suo officio uti, et instrumenta conficere, &c."

See as to the knowledge of the civil law possessed by the clergy, in Anglo Saxon Britain, PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 648.

* "In subscriptionibus Regii chirographi." INGULPHUS. "*Chirographum*, Diploma, scriptum, pactum, Regum et Principum manibus ac subscriptionibus roboratum." DUCANGE. See same author as to the distinction between "Chirographus," and "Syngraphus."

† The charter to which these signatures attached, will be found in KEMBLE'S *Codex Diplomaticus*, vol. ii. pp. 36, 45, No. cclxv.

plored that through the merits of that holy confessor, the divine mercy might be shewn to them. These prayers were heard; for the Lord so far poured down upon them the abundant showers of His ever saving grace, that sometimes even in a single day, a hundred paralytics were restored to health.*

——

Alfred, the beloved son of Ethelwulf, was attacked with an apparently irremediable disease, and was sent to Saint Modwena, then residing in Ireland, for the purpose of being cured.† The monastery to which Modwena was

* Ingulphus, Hist. p. 16. (Gale), pp. 861, 862. (Script. Post Bedam.)

† "Hic quoque Alurédum filium suum prædilectum incurabili morbo languentem, ad sanctam Modwennam apud Hiberniam tunc morandum transmisit." R. Higden, *Polychron*, lib. v. pp. 253, 254.

"In tempore illo Alfredus filius regis Anglicorum, habens infirmitatam maximam * * * Cui Hibernienses dixerunt: vade ad abbatissam Movennam, et pete, ut pro infirmitate tua Dominum Deum suum deprecatur." Vit. S. Modwennæ, c. ii. § 23. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. vi. p. 301. "Hîc quoque Athulphus filium suum Aluredum, incurabili morbo languentem ad sanctam Modwennam Hiberniæ morantem, curandum transmisit." John Tinemouth, *Hist. Aurea*, (MS. in Bibl. Boleiana, lib. xviii. c. 14), as referred to in Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. ii. p. 365 (Ellis's ed.) We have placed this event (hitherto scarcely noticed), in the year 851, as contemporaneous with a time, when a species of plague prevailed in England, and as (not improbably) connected with the extraordinary fact, that Alfred, when only five years of age, was sent to Rome, (A.D. 853), to be blessed and anointed by the Pope. The following extract will shew it to be an admitted fact, that a son of Ethelwulf was sent to Ireland:— "John of Tinemouth ascribes the foundation of Pollesworth, to Athulf, or Ethelwolf, son of King Edward, whose son, Alured *grandson* to King Edgar, was cured by St. Modwena, of some infirmity." (Appendix, No. 1, to Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, ed. 1656, p. 799.) Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. ii. p. 362.

attached, was afterwards destroyed, and King Ethelwulf, upon her arrival in England, gave to her land sufficient for the construction of two convents. One of these was built near the forest of Arden, at Pollesworth, and was long a happy and flourishing establishment.* In this convent

---

See also ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. pp. 125, 126, § 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41. The importance that ought to be attached to this circumstance has escaped that attention, which otherwise would have been bestowed upon it, by the mistranslation of the Latin 'Aluredus" into "Alured," instead of "Alfred;" for instance, HENRY of HUNTINGDON says, "misit Adelwlf *Aluredum* filium suum Leoni Papæ Romani," p. 348. "Hunc *Aluredum* misit pater. R. HOVEDEN, p. 413. "*Aluredum* secum duxit." R. DICET, p. 450.

One mode of writing the name of Alfred, it is remarked by RUDBORNE, was "Aldredus," upon which he thus comments;—

"Sic vero uno modo Alfredus vulgariter nominabatur; erat enim secundum vulgarem opinionem quinomius, viz.: A-lu-re-dus, Alnre-dus, E-lu-re-dus, Elnre-dus, Aldredus." *Hist. Mag.*, lib. iii. c. 6. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. i. p. 207.

As to the cure of Alfred effected by St. Modwena, Bromton says: "Tradunt tamen nonnulli eum per sanctam Modewennam virginem Hibernicam ab hac peste curatum. Voto tandem adepto, infestior eum morbus etiam subruptius anno xx usque ad xlv annum acrius fatigavit." *Chron.* p. 818.

*"Quæ *usque hodie* floret." JOHN TINEMOUTH. If at the time of "the Reformation," justice had prevailed, and any mercy, tenderness, or compassion, for the poor had been felt, the following extracts from DUGDALE'S *Monasticon* must prove, that Pollesworth convent should still be in existence.

"All which lands, rents, &c. before specified," (it is observed in the Monasticon), "by the survey made in 26 Henry VIII., were valued at £109 6*s.* 8*d.*, but of which 26*s.* 8*d.* yearly, being deducted for almes given to the poor on Maundy Thursday, at the washing of their feet; and 26*s.* per annum for three bushels of rye at 6*d.* a bushel, made into bread and distributed weekly, throughout the year to poor people at the gate of the monastery; and 30*s.* per annum for the fee of Sir John Willoughby, Knight, then high steward thereof; and several other constant payments, viz: of rents, wages, and pensions, which altogether amounted to £21 10*s.* 3*d.*, left the clear yearly value, as the commissioners at

were to be seen the nuns, Ositha, and Althea, with the sanctified princess, Editha, the sister of King Ethelwulf.

---

that time certified, no more than £87 16*s.* 3*d.*, so that being under £200, it was by the statute 27 Henry VIII., then liable to dissolution, yet for some respects it was permitted to stand till the general destruction of all the great houses in 30 Henry VIII., at which time the nuns here being, subscribed an instrument, dated ult. Jan., 30 Henry VIII., whereunto their conventual seal was affixed" by which they surrendered their monastery.

"The delay in the surrender will probably be best accounted for by the following letter, addressed in 1537, by the king's commissioners to Lord Cromwell. The original is still preserved among the Cottonian Manuscripts in the British Museum.

"'After oure duties of humble recommendacon unto youre good lordship hade, it may please the same to be advertyzed that we have surveyed the monasterye or nunnery of Pollesworth, in the county of Warwick, wherein ys an abbas namyd dame Alice Fitzherbert, of the age of lx yeres, a very sadde, discrete, and relygyous woman, and hath byn heed and governor their xxvij yeares; and in the same howse under her rule ar xii vertuous and religyous nonnes and of good conversacon, as far as we can here or perceyve, as well by our examinacons as by the open fame and report of all the country, and never one of the nonnes that will leyve nor forsake their habite and relygyon. Wherefore in our opynions, yf it myght so stande with your lordship's pleasure, ye mought doo a right good and meryetoryous dede to be a medyator to the king's highnes for the said house to stande and remayn unsuppressed. For, as we thinke, *ye shall not speke in the preferment of a better Nunnery nor of better women.* And in the towne of Pollesworth ar xliij tenements and never a plough but one; the resydue be artifycers, laborer, and vitellers, and lyve in effect by the said house: and the repayre and resorte that ys made to the gentylemens children and studiounts that ther doo lif to the nombre sometyme of xxx^ti and sometyme xl^ti and moo, that their be right vertuously brought upp. And the Towne and Nonnery standith in a harde soile and barren ground, and to our estymacions, yf the nounnery be suppressed, the towne will shortely after fall to ruyne and dekaye, and the people therein to the numbre of vj^xx or vij^xx score persones are nott unlike to preserve your lordshipe in good lif and longe with encrease of honor. Wrytten at Maxstok beside Coventre the xxviij daye of July." DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. p. 363. (ELLIS'S ed.) See CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. ii. pp. 447, 465. (GOUGH'S ed.)

Modwena remained for some time in the second convent erected by her, at Trenshale, and from thence proceeded three times on a pilgrimage to Rome.* The last seven years of her life she passed as a hermitess, in the little isle of Andresey (in the Trent), near Burton, and there yielded up her spirit to the Lord.†

---

* JOH. TINEMOUTH, *Hist. Aurea*, lib. xviii. c. 14.

† R. HIGDEN, *Polychron*, lib. v. p. 254. See CAPGRAVE, *Nova Legenda Angliæ*, p. ccxxxiv b, ccxl a. *Britannia Sancta*, vol. ii. pp. 14, 15. BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 20. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. ii. pp. 296, 312. In the same vol. pp. 241 to 246, an attempt is made by Pinius to clear up the difficulties, which have arisen from the ancient hagioligists confounding the events in the life of Modwena, with those of another Irish Saint Monenna.

The relics of S. Modwena were enshrined at Burton. Under the date 1201, we find the following reference made to them :—

"Eodem anno S. Wlstanus Wigorniensis et S. Modwenna, Burtoniensis claruerunt multis et magnis miraculis." *Annales. M. Burton*, p. 263, (GALE.)

"The church of Burton abbey was dedicated to the blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Modwen, although in Domesday, as well as in many of the charters to this monastery, it is called the abbey of St. Mary only. St. Modwen or Modwenna, was an Irish saint, who lived as an anchorite several years near this place, in an island of the Trent, called Andredesy, where she was buried. Her reliques were afterwards enshrined in this abbey, which, on her account, according to Leland, was sometimes called Modwennestow." St. Modwen's epitaph is thus given by Camden:

"Ortum Modwennæ dat Hibernia, Scotia finem,
Anglia dat tumulum, dat Deus astra poli.
Prima dedit vitam, sed mortem terra secunda,
Et terram terræ tertia terra dedit.
Aufert Lanfortin quam terra Conallea præfert,
Felix Burtonium virginis ossa tenet."

DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. iii. p. 33. (ELLIS.)

Far different is the spirit in which St. Modwena is referred to in a letter from a "gospiller," named Thacker, to Secretary Cromwell. Thacker states, in the letter (still extant), that he sends for the purpose of being burned, "the image of Seint Anne of Bukston;

Bertwulf, king of the Mercians, died in the year 852, and was immediately succeeded on the throne by Burhred, who reigned for two and twenty years.* The same year in which Burhred was hailed as a monarch, he espoused the daughter of Ethelwulf, king of the West Saxons. The nuptials were celebrated in the royal villa of Chippenham, † and there, too, the title of queen was bestowed upon the princess Ethelswitha.‡ By this marriage, Burhred obtained considerable support as a sovereign, and was in some degree consoled for the ravages the Danes had inflicted, and the losses his country had endured.§

---

and also the image of Seint Moodwyn of Burton-upon-Trent, with hir red kowe and hir staff, which wymen laboring of child in those parties were very desirous to have with them to leane upon, and to walk with yt, and had greate confidence in the same staff; which two imagis I have bestowed by our Lady of Ippswich. *There cam nothyng with theym* but the bare imagis." ELLIS's *Original Letters illustrative of English History* (third series), vol. iii. p. 100. For proofs of the rapacity of this Thacker, see same volume, pp. 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 106, 109. As to the monasteries of Pollesworth and Burton, see LELAND's *Collectaneana*, vol. i. p. 27, vol. iii. pp. 373, 408, 409. CAMDEN's *Britannia*, vol. ii. pp. 497, 513.

* ROG. DE WEND, vol. i. p. 285. See F. WIGORN, *Chron. Mailros*; S. DUNELMENS, ad an. 853. The last date is manifestly a mistake, as there is reference to a charter in the Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 852, which King Burhred subscribed. Of Bertwulf, it is said by Malmsbury, but incorrectly, "Novissime a piratis Danorum *ultra mare* fugatus est." *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. i. § 96.

† Chippenham, it is observed, by Alford, was a celebrated market, from which its name is derived—"Nam *Cyppan* Saxonice mercari sonat, et *Cypman* mercator: quod nos hodie exiguia deflectione, *cheape* et *chapman* dicimus." *Annal. Ecc. Ang.*, vol. iii. p. 77, § 3. See LELAND's *Collectaneana*, vol. iii. pp. 216, 217, 280.

‡ ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 286. *Sax. Chron.* 853.

§ W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. i. § 96.

This marriage took place after the festival of Easter, and was distinguished for its truly royal magnificence.*

In the year 853, Burhred, king of Mercia, and his witan† sent an embassy to Ethelwulf, beseeching his aid against the Midland Welsh, that is against the inhabitants of that portion of the islands, which lies between Mercia, and the Western Sea, and who had risen in violent rebellion against him. Ethelwulf was not slow in responding to such a demand.‡ He marched with an army across Mercia into North Wales, and subjected it completely to Burhred.§

The same year, the ealdorman Ealhere, with the military array of Kent, and the ealdorman Hoda having under his command the warriors of Surrey, fought against an army of Pagans, in the island, which by the Saxons is designated "Tenet" (Thanet,) and by the Britains "Ruin." Both parties fought long and desperately. At the commencement of the strife, the Christians were victorious over their adversaries; but the latter being able to prolong the battle for a considerable period of time, vast numbers were on both sides, either destroyed by the sword, or drowned in

---

* ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 2, ad an. 853. *Annal.* p. 156. F. WIGORN, p. 583. ETHELWERD, *Hist.*, lib. iii. p. 841.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ ASSER, *Vit Ælf.*, p. 2.

§ *Sax. Chron.* Asser adds "gentem illam devastans." "Burrhed had already fought a battle, in which Merfyn Frych, the British king fell, and was succeeded by Roderic, who has obtained in Welsh history, the epithet of Mawr or The Great. * * Roderic endured the invasion of Ethelwulph and Burrhed, who penetrated with victorious ravages to Anglesey." TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. pp 491, 492.

the sea.* The conflict at last concluded in the deaths of the English leaders.†

---

* "Plurimi ceciderunt, et in aqua mersi suffocati sunt." ASSER. "Occisa est et *naufragata*."

† ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 2. There is no expression in the ancient English Chronicles to justify the statement of Mr. S. Turner, that in this conflict, "the pirates gained the victory," vol. i. p. 492. Even the quotation which he gives, (vol. i. pp. 480, 481,) from the Quida of Ragnar, though consistent with the fact of the Northmen being victorious, is not demonstrative of it; nor does it prove more than that the pirates having killed a great many of the English, with their leader, and having lost a good many ships and men, "magna gens de naufragata," were obliged to sheer off from the English coast.

The extracts from the Chronicles which we have already given, disprove the assertions of the physical or mental superiority of the heathen Northmen to the Catholic English, made by Mr. Laing, (vol. i. pp. 13, 15, 33, &c.) The English, under a king who sent his son to Rome, and afterwards made a pilgrimage to see and be blessed by the Pope, repelled by his bravery the cruel invaders from his kingdom. That these Pagans were at a subsequent period successful, is most true—and the reason for their success is distinctly shewn by Mr. Laing himself, who is a very reasonable gentleman, when he has not the bugbear of "Romish superstition on church influence" (p. 9) before him.

Mr. Laing shews, (vol. i. p. 41, 42,) that in ancient battles, there was a great difficulty in moving about the munitions of war—that once soldiers were deprived of their offensive or defensive weapons, or that they had exhausted the former in battle, or lost the latter by a defeat, there were no immediate means of supplying the deficiency. Thus, (vol. i. p. 46,) he remarks, as to the Northmen, that they always had with them a large supply of offensive weapons in their ships, and then proceeds to say:—

"This circumstance, namely, the great bulk in stowage, and in transport by hand, of the usual arms of the age, *arrows and casting spears, and stones in any considerable quantities, for a body of troops,* and the difficulty of concentrating stores of them just at the spot where they are needed on land, *accounts in a great measure for the success of comparatively small bodies of invaders* landing on the coasts of England or Normandy, in those ages. The invaders had the advantage of a supply of weapons in their vessels to retire

The same year, in which these events occurred, King Ethelwulf sent his son Alfred to Rome.* The prince was accompanied by a magnificent cortege, comprising persons both of noble rank, as well as of meaner degree.† At that time, the meek and humble abbot of the monastery of St. Bertin, was Grimbald.‡ Thither, the pious child

---

upon, or to advance from; while their opponents, having once expended what they carried with them, *which could scarcely exceed the consumption in one ordinary battle of a few hours' duration, would be totally without missiles.*" LAING'S *Chronicles of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 46.

How true this is, Asser's description of the battle at Thanet, fully proves :—" Animose et acriter belligeraverunt, et primitus Christiani victoriam habuerunt: prolongatoque diu prœlio ibidem ex utraque parte plurimi ceciderunt, et in aqua mersi suffocati sunt. Et comites illi ambo ibidem occubuerunt."

In this age men have marvelled at the courage which the British soldier exhibited at Moodkee, and Ferozesha, in attacking with the bayonet a Pagan army, entrenched and served with a complete park of artillery. Many such victories were won in the ninth century, by English over the barbarous Northmen; but, because not successful in all such battles, and against such frightful disadvantages, a modern author, writing "philosophically!" declares, that they were defeated, because they had been "tamed down by the church influence and superstition of four centuries into a state of listless existence, without spirit or feeling as a nation, or confidence in self-dependence as individuals, and looking for aid from saints' prayers and miracles." LAING'S *Chronicles of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 15.

Such is *the theory* of what is called "the philosophy of history." Unfortunately for the "theory," and to the great disparagement of modern "philosophy," both are directly contradicted by undeniable facts.

* *Sax. Chron.*, A.D. 853.

† "Magno nobilium et etiam ignobilium numero constipatum Romam transmisit." ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 2. See RUDBORNE'S *Hist. Mag.*, lib. iii. c. 2. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. i. p. 201.

‡ *Annales Wintonien.*

Alfred and his attendants, repaired for the purpose of obtaining rest and refreshment.* All were welcomed by the abbot, who, not content with the common exercises of charity, entreated of them to remain with him until the following morning. His anxiety was to conduct himself towards them as a generous host, and therefore did he devote himself to the truly benign task of advising them with respect to the salvation of their souls. He instructed them how they might, by despising the pleasures of the body, learn to love, and to desire the joys of heaven; and how they might with firmness, and unswerving perseverance pursue that path, which leads to the kingdom of God—not permitting their wishes to evaporate in mere words, and empty phrases; but ever having it enshrined as the great moving impulse in their hearts. The result of these discourses was the delay for several days of Prince Alfred in the monastery of St. Bertin; and during all that time, this glorious child, was to be seen day after day, abandoning all boyish sports, and eagerly placing himself at the feet of the great teacher Grimbald, in order that, like another Mary, he might be instructed in the mysteries of our Holy Religion. Such an impression did these instructions produce upon the pious mind of Alfred, that he even then internally resolved, that if he should return safe from Rome, and the opportunity were ever afforded to him, he would make use of it to do honour, to exalt, and to retain Grimbald in his native land. †

---

* —— "Ad quod gratia hospitandi, cum suis comitibus, filius regis, semper Deo devotus Alfredus divertisset." *Annal. Winton.*

† *Annal. Winton.* as quoted in the *Acta Sanctorum*, (Julii), vol. ii. pp. 656, 657. De S. Grimbald, c. 3, § 31, 32. Alford.

Pope Leo IV. occupied the chair of the apostle, at the time that the infant Alfred visited Rome. He received, cherished, and adopted the prince as his son, and then anointed him as a king.*

Annal. Eccl. Ang., vol. iii. p. 161, § 4. LELAND'S *Collectanea*, vol. i. p. 18. We cannot avoid remarking the beautiful pictures which is here presented to the mind—the great King Alfred, as a child, listening with admiration, to the religious instruction of him, who was destined to be "the first professor of divinity at the University of Oxford." See BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 33.

Upon the route taken by Alfred on his journey to Rome, it is observed by Pagi:—

"Egressus ex insula Alfredus ad Morinos descendit; et ad Sancti Bertini Monasterium divertens in Grimbaldi monachi notissimi cognitionem venit, quem postea in Britanniam evocatum summe coluit." BARONIUS *cum critic* PAGI, vol. xiv. p. 432, § 26.

* "Unxit in regem." ASSER. "Consecrated him king, and adopted him as his spiritual son." (And he hine to cyninge gehalgode, and hine him to biscop—suna genam,) *Sax. Chron.* Florence, of Worcester, says that Alfred was so anointed at the request of his father, "sui patris rogatu," A.D. 853, p. 583. Rudborne states the same fact, with the addition, "ut primus omnium Regum Angliæ, inungeretur in regem a sanctissimo Papa Leone * * * et quod devote deprecabatur rex, libenter annuebat summus pontifex." *Hist. Maj.*, p. 201. See *Chron. Mailros*, ad an. 853, p. 142. As to Alfred's being anointed by the pope upon his first visit to Rome, it may be, that the annalists have confounded the circumstances of Alfred's visit to Rome, when alone, and his subsequent visit with his father, when he was undoubtedly anointed, and even crowned as a king, or, as it is stated by Roger de Wendover, "Ubi cum anno integro, rex cum filio demoratus fuisset, fecit filium suum ibi a papa in regem coronari." Vol. i. p. 290. See *Sax. Chron.* under date 854. To the anointing of Alfred in Rome, may be traced the subsequent rebellion of Athelstan. Upon Alfred's journey to Rome, and his being anointed by the pope, much information will be found in SPELMAN'S *Life of Ælfred*, book i. § 23 to 26, pp. 17, 21. That Alfred was not

In the year 844,* King Ethelwulf freed the tenth part of his entire dominions from every service and tribute which they were bound to render to the crown; and by a perpetual charter,† consecrated them with the cross of

---

the first king in England, who received the royal unction, is distinctly proved by Dr. Lingard, *History and Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 28. (Ed. 1845.)

The suggestion we have ventured to make, with respect to the events in Alfred's life, in the year 854, seems to derive some strength from the peculiar expressions of Ethelwerd:—"quem et sanctificat in regem et filium a charismate nominavit, ut modo sub manu episcoporum solemus accipientes parvulos filios nominare." *Hist.*, lib. iii. c. 3, p. 841. William of Malmsbury however states positively, that Alfred was anointed as king by the pope, previous to Ethelwulf's visit to Rome:—

——"Qui etiam *antea* Elfredum filium ejus ad se missum honorifice susceperat, et regem inunxerat." *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 109. See also § 121.

With respect to the distinction between anointing the ancient and modern Frankish kings, see Bouquet, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii., Præfat. p. xxxvi.

In connexion with the journey of Alfred to Rome, at the early age of five years, and his being anointed by the pope, it is remarked by Mr. Turner;—"As St. Neot, the son or *brother of Ethelwulph went about this period, seven times to Rome*, his journies or his advice may have had some connexion with this project." *Hist. of Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 492, note 20. We have not been able to discover any fact on which this suggestion can be founded. The greater probability is, that St. Swithin was the adviser of Alfred's visit to Rome, as he certainly was his companion in that journey. See Rudborn's *Hist. Maj.*, p. 201. Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 77. Spelman's *Life of Ælfred*, p. 18, § 24. See also in connection with this subject, Alford's *Annal. Ecc. Ang.*, vol. iii. p. 77, § 4, p. 80, § 16. Baronius, *cum critic* Pagi, vol. xiv. p. 298, § 2. Ducange, in verb. "*Secundarius.*"

* *Sax. Chron.*

† "Sempiternoque grafio, in cruce Christi pro redemptione animæ suæ et antecessorum suorum uni et trino Deo immolavit." Asser.

Christ, to the One God in Three Divine Persons, for the redemption of his own soul, and those of his royal predecessors.* Thus, for the honour of God, and his own salvation he registered a tenth of his land over all his kingdom.†

We annex the charter of immunities, which he granted to all England.‡

The reign of our Lord is, and shall be for ever, and for "ever,§ whereas, the times, in which we live are filled "with many afflictions; so that the awful conflagrations of "war have been enkindled amongst us, bringing with "them the spoliation of our treasures, the cruel devasta-"tions of plundering foemen, the manifold tribulations "resulting from the invasions of barbarous and pagan "nations, and all tending alike to our present affliction, "and future destruction; and since we can discern that a "season of great peril is impending over us, therefore is "it, that we, Ethelwulf, king of the West Saxons, with "the counsel and advice of our bishops and nobles, "do declare it as a salutary means, and a general re-"medy, that we should allocate a certain portion of the "lands, we have inherited, to all those who previously "have been in possession of them, whatever be their con-"dition in life, whether they be men or women, who have "devoted their lives to the service of God, or lay-

---

* Asser, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 2.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ — "Apponam scriptum libertatis ecclesiarum quod *toti* concessit *Angliæ*." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 113.

* "Regnante Domino nostro in perpetuum." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. §. 114.

"men* so that every tenth house† no matter how small, "and every tenth portion of land, shall be endowed with a "perpetual enfranchisement, that is, that it is to be pre- "served and guarded from all secular services, and from "all royal contributions, be they great or small, as from "the taxes, that we designate Witereden.‡ We desire for "the salvation of our souls, and the remission of our "sins, that they remain free from all incumbrances; that "they be devoted to the service of God alone, without "even being called upon to aid in the military array, the

---

* "To poor laymen"—"miseris laicis," according to Ingulphus. *Hist.* p. 17.

† "Semper decimam mansionem ubi minimum sit, tamen partem decimam, in libertatem perpetuam perdonari dijudicavi." W. MALMSB.

"Semper decimam mansionem, ubi minimum sit, tum decimam partem *omnium bonorum*, in libertatem perpetuam donari *Sanctæ Ecclesiæ* dijudicavi." INGULPHUS.

"Aliquam portionem terræ meæ Deo et Sanctæ Mariæ et omnibus sanctis jure perpetuo possidendam concedam, decimam scilicet partem terræ meæ, ut sit tuta muneribus et libera ab omnibus servitiis secularibus, &c." ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 289. See also MAT. WESTMINST., p. 158, where the same words are used.

‡ "*Wite*, mulct, fine. This was the penalty falling to the king (except in cases of alienation to others) or to the state, for violations of the law; though Wih. ii. exhibits a case where half the '*wite*' went to the informer. * * * *Wite*-raeden does not seem to differ much in signification from '*wite*,' *raeden* in general adding little or nothing to the signification of the words with which it is joined." THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, (Glossary.) See *Laws of Ina.* c. 50, 71, pp. 58, 64.

"Proprie est *Witæ* se mulctæ *redditio* ex Saxon. *Wite*, mulcta, et *redenne*, redditio." DUCANGE, *Glossarium*. See *Leges Langobardicæ*, Rothar. c. i. § ii. Ludovicus. c. i., § 15. CANCIANUS *Barbar. Leg. Ant.* vol. i. pp. 65, 186. TWYSDEN *Decem Script.* Glossarium.

"construction of bridges, or the maintenance of for-
"tresses,* so that those" (thus benefitted) "may the more
"diligently and uninterruptedly offer up their prayers to
"God for us, who have, in some degree, lessened the
"burdens imposed upon them.

"Moreover, since it has seemed fitting to the Bishops
"Alstan, in the church of Sherborne, and to Swithin in
"the church of Winchester with all their abbots, and
"other servants of God, to advise all our brothers and
"sisters to assemble in their respective churches every day
"of Mercury, that is, every Wednesday, in every week,
"when the entire congregation shall sing fifty psalms,
"and each priest say two masses, one for the king Ethel-
"wulf, and the other for his ealdormen, who are assenting
"parties to this gift,† so that they may obtain pardon for

---

* That is, these lands were to be exempted from the "trinoda necessitas," which is thus clearly defined by Sir Francis Palgrave:—"The payment of the imposts required for the repairs of the bridges and highways;—the contributions for keeping up the walls and fortifications of the strong-holds;—and the military services required for the resistance of the enemy, and the defence of the kingdom. Few grants were ever made to the church without the reservations of the 'trinoda necessitas;' sometimes, instead of leaving the military contingent in uncertainty, the number of vassals and 'shields' which the abbot was to send forth to the wars, is specifically defined." PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. pp. 156, 157. See LINGARD'S *History and Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 241. (Ed. 1845).

† "It appears, that at those congresses (the witenagemots) the vote of the majority did not bind any one member of the empire to the political measure decided on, unless he himself had concurred in it." ANSTEY'S *Guide to the History of the Laws and Constitution of England*, p. 131. See also pp. 130, 132. PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. pp. 638, 639, 643.

"their sins, and a remission of the punishment due for "them. For the king, whilst living, is to be said the "psalm 'Oh! God who justifiest;' for the nobles whilst "living 'Stretch forth, Oh Lord!' For the king when "dead, prayers are to be offered up in his behalf, indivi- "dually; but for the nobles when dead, they are to be "prayed for in common. Let then this constitution be "as firmly upheld, during all the days of Christianity, as "this immunity itself is maintained; as long as faith "encreaseth in the English nation.

"This Charter of Donation has been written in the year "of our Lord, 844*, the fourth of the indiction, the fifth "day, the nones of November, in the city of Winchester, "and before the high altar in St. Peter's Church. And this "has been done in honor of St. Michael the Archangel, and "of the blessed Mary, the glorious queen, and mother of "God; and also of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, of "our holy father, Pope Gregory, and of all the saints.

"And then, for its greater security, King Ethelwulf "placed this charter on the altar of St. Peter;† and the

---

* See as to the difference in the dates assigned to this charter, Mr. Hardy's note to William of Malmesbury, vol. i. p. 170, note 5, p. 172, note 1. (E. H. S.). LINGARD'S *History and Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 246, 247. (Ed. 1845.)

† "Lex Alemannorum, cap. i. § i., ubi de donationibus factis Ecclesiæ: Et qui hoc facere voluerit, per chartam de rebus suis ad Ecclesiam, ubi dare voluerit, firmitatem faciat, et testes sex vel septem adhibeat, et nomina eorum ipsa charta contineat, et coram sacerdote, qui ad eandem ecclesiam desservit, super altare ponat: et proprietas de ipsis rebus ad ipsam Ecclesiam in perpetuum permaneat." See for further authorities DUCANGE in verb. "*In altari offerre.*" PALGRAVE, *Rise and Progress of English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 141. See MAITLAND'S *Dark Ages*, p. 70. SPELMAN'S *English Works*, preface to *De Non Temerandis Ecclesiis*, p. xiii.

"bishops for God's faith received it, and afterwards, as it "has been above set forth, sent it to all the churches in "their several dioceses."*

The reign of the most glorious Edmund, King of the East Angles commenced in 855, when he was not more than fourteen years of age.† This most pious youth was elected as king, by the unanimous assent of all the nobles and people of East Anglia. Contrary to his own inclination, he was, it might be said, forced by Humbert, Bishop of Elmham, to accept of the crown, which was placed on his head, by that prelate, at a royal villa, which has since been known as Bury.‡

---

* W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 114. See SPELMAN'S *Concilia,* vol. i. p. 348, 352. LABBÆUS *Concilia,* vol. viii. pp. 242, 246. S. DUNELM. *Hist.* p. 121. ETHELRED *Chron.* p. 351, BROMTON *Chron.* p. 802. DODD'S *History of the Church,* vol. i. p. 55. (Tierney's ed.) COLLIER'S *Ecclesiastical History,* vol. i. pp. 368, 373. TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons,* vol. i. pp. 493, 495. This charter, it is observed by the Rev. John Sharpe, B.A., in a note to his translation of Malmsbury, "has given rise to much controversy; *some* holding that it conveyed the tithes of the land only, while *others* maintain that it was an actual transfer of the tenth part of all lands in the kingdom," (p. 124.) Sir Francis Palgrave, and Dr. Lingard prove that it did neither the one nor the other—but that it exempted from secular services, rents to the king, taxes, &c., a tenth part of Ethelwulf's entire dominions. See *Rise and Progress of English Commonwealth,* vol. i. pp. 158, 159, 160.—*Anglo Saxon Church,* vol. i. pp. 240, 248. (Ed. 1845.) KEMBLE'S *Codex Diplomaticus,* vol. ii. nos. cclxx, cclxxi, cclxxv, cclxxvi.

† ASSER, *Annal.* p. 156. ASSER it will be remembered was contemporary with the Sainted King Edmund.

‡ ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 292. "Iste adolescens piisimus

The same year Ethelwulf travelled to Rome,* with all the pomp and magnificence that belonged to his exalted station. Alfred, who was beloved by him beyond all his other children was made the companion of his voyage, and thus for the second time, visited Rome.† Whilst in Rome, he presented to St. Peter, through the hands of Pope Leo the Fourth, (by whom his son Alfred had previously been received, and anointed as king) that tribute (Peter's pence) which England still pays to Rome.‡ Ethelwulf remained in Rome for the space of an entire year, and whilst there, he had re-erected in a splendid manner "the school of the English," which it is believed was first founded by Offa

---

ab omnibus regionis illius magnatibus et populis rex electus.' See *Chron. Mailros*, p. 143. ALFORD, vol. ii. p. 90. § 1, 2., p. 91, § 5, 6.

* "Karlus etiam Edilwlfum Regem Anglorum Saxonum Romam properantem honorificè suscipit, omni regio habitu donat, et usque ad regni sui terminos cum obsequiis rege dignis deduci facit." *Annal. Bertin*, ad ann. 855. This year died also the Emperor Lothair, who feeling death approach entered a monastery, was shorn, and assumed the humble habit and the pious manners of a monk. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 71. MARIANUS SCOTUS, ad ann. 855, &c.

† ASSER, *Annal.* and *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 2.

‡ "Ibique tributum, quod Anglia hodieque pensitat, Sancto Petro obtulit coram quarto Leone papa, qui etiam, &c." W. MALMSB. The meaning we draw from these passages is, that Ethelwulf for the purpose of manifesting his respect and devotion for the see of Rome, made himself the bearer of the annual tribute to the pontiff, which had been established by Ina, and confirmed by Offa. See vol. i. pp. 569, 703, 707, of this work.

Antiquarians by attaching a different signification to the words of Malmsbury, have fallen into mistakes from which they in vain seek to extricate themselves. See MR. HARDY'S *note to Malmsbury*, vol. i. p. 152. (E.H.S.) LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 26. (THORPE'S translation).

king of the Mercians, and that had been burned down the year previously to Ethelwulf's visit.*

The king remained in Rome, along with his son, for the space of an entire year, and there having had Alfred crowned as a king, by the pope, he proceeded on his journey homeward.†

In the month of October in the year 856, Ethelwulf was married to Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald.

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. §. 109. In the great fire at Rome, by which the school of the English was destroyed, a miracle is recorded to have been performed by Pope Leo, by making the sign of the cross. See Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 89. We may here observe, that the old fabricators of church history attempted by what has been justly designated "a most notorious forgery," to interpolate *a Pope Joan* as holding a place amongst the pontiffs of the church. As there may still be persons in England who believe in a Pope Joan, and yet are desirous to know the truth, we recommend them to look to Baronius *cum critic* Pagi, vol. xiv. pp. 424, 432. Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 89, (Leo IV.), and a modern Lutheran author, Gfrörer, *Geschichte der Est-und-Westfrankischen Carolinger*, vol. i. pp. 288, 293.

Alford suggests that in addition to the munificence of Ethelwulf, specified by Malmsbury, that the English king, also bestowed rich gifts upon the pope, bishops, priests, nobles, and even the populace of Rome, see *Annal. Ecc. Ang.*, lib. iii. p. 86. §. 5, 6. He certainly obtained from the pope an important concession on behalf of English penitents, doomed for public crimes to wear chains for a certain period of time, viz., that such a punishment should only be inflicted upon them in their own country. See Rudborn's *Hist. Mag.* p. 202. Harpsfield, *Hist. Ecc. Ang. Non, Sæc.* c. 3. p. 157. Alford, vol. iii. p. 87, §. 8. Lappenberg, vol. ii. p. 26. (Thorpe.)

† Roc. de Wend., vol. i. p. 290. Pope Leo IV. died on the 17th July, 855, and Bennett III., priest of the church of St. Calixtus, was immediately chosen pope in his room." Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 89. It may be surmised that it was by the latter the crown was placed on the head of King Alfred.

The princess Judith had been betrothed to him in the previous month of July. The espousals took place in the palace of Verberie, when the nuptial blessing was bestowed by Hincmar, Bishop of Rheims, who also placed upon her head a diadem, and hailed her as a queen—a title that had fallen into desuetude amongst the West Saxons.*

Upon the completion of his marriage, Ethelwulf determined upon returning to England.†

Meanwhile, in consequence of the delay, which had taken place with respect to the return of Ethelwulf, an infamous plot, and such as outraged every feeling and practise that ought to prevail in a Christian nation was entered into against him.

It is stated that the principal leaders in this conspiracy were king Athelbald, the son of Ethelwulf, Alstan, Bishop of Sherborne, and Eanwulf, the Earldorman of Somerset. The object of the conspiracy was to prevent Ethelwulf's being permitted to reascend the throne upon his return from Rome. By some it is believed that this unheard-of crime should be ascribed to the suggestions of the bishop,

---

* *Annales Bertiniani*, A.D. 856. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 72., see pp. 621, 622, same volume, for an account of the coronation of Queen Judith, upon whom a double benediction was pronounced, first as a spouse, and then as a queen. The magnificence of Judith's crown is indicated in the prayer: "Gloria et honore coronet te Dominus, et ponat caput tuum coronam de spiritali lapide pretioso; ut quicquid *in fulgore auri, et in vario nitore gemmarum significatur, &c.* See also PERTZ. *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica. Legum*, vol. i. pp. 450, 451. In ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 87, § 10, will be found a letter from the Abbot Lupus, and intended for the perusal of King Ethelwulf and Queen Judith, which demonstrates how much the property of the church then suffered from the rapacity of the impious.

† ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 2.

and the ealdorman. Many however impute it to king Athebald alone; because this was but like to many other crimes which his perverse disposition induced him to perpetrate—crimes of which we ourselves have heard, and, the probability of their being committed by him, subsequent events (as it will be seen) have tended strongly to corroborate.

The attempt, however, was made by Athelbald, and his associate conspirators to commit this atrocious offence—viz.: to repel a king by force, from his own kingdom—a deed which Heaven could not permit, nor the old Saxon nobility ever assent to. An irremediable misfortune was impending over the whole of the Anglo-Saxon race: it was about to be involved in a strife between father and son, the entire kingdom was on the point of being desolated by a civil war, in which rebellion, cruelty, and crime would day by day encrease the miseries, and aggravate the misfortunes of the people: all this was about to occur, had not the ineffable clemency of the father found a support, in the assent and approval of the entire body of the nobility to the proposition, that the previously united kingdom of the West Saxons should thenceforth be divided between the father and the son—that the eastern part should be retained by the father, and the western assigned to the son. In that very place, where the father, in the opinion of every just and honest man, ought to reign, a wicked, wilful and obstinate son was permitted to govern; for the western part of the West Saxon kingdom, we may observe, is far superior, in every respect, to the eastern.

Upon the arrival of Ethelwulf from Rome, the entire people acted as became them. All were rejoiced to behold

again their good old king,* and had he but assented to their wishes, they would at once have driven out of the land his criminal son, Athelbald, with all his aiders, abettors, and counsellors. To this proposition, Ethelwulf, ever remarkable for his extreme clemency and his prudent forethought, refused his assent. He would not permit a possible good to be done for himself, which might be attended with a probable evil to others; but at the same time he commanded—and the command neither excited the opposition nor the ill-will of his nobles—that Judith the daughter of King Charles, should, as a queen, sit on the royal throne by his side. This, which was done in direct opposition to a perverse custom that prevailed amongst the West Saxons, was adhered to in regard to Judith to the day of King Ethelwulf's death.†

King Ethelwulf lived for two years after his return to England from Rome. During that period of time, whilst his mind was occupied with cares and studies that might be beneficial to others, and useful to himself in the pre-

---

* "And aefter tham to his leodum owom, and hie thaer gefaegene waerum," *Sax. Chron.* "After this he came to his people, and they were fain to receive him." INGRAM'S *Translation*, p. 95.

† ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* pp. 2, 3. The author then gives the origin of this custom amongst the West Saxons, and which was so disparaging to the wives of their monarch. He details, as he had heard them from the lips of King Alfred, "a domino meo Ælfredo," the crimes of Edburga, the daughter of Offa, see vol. i. pp. 681, 682, of this work. LINGARD'S *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 35, 36, (ed. 1845).

Roger de Wendover declares that the violation of the West Saxon custom, gave additional strength to the conspiracy formed against the restoration of Ethelwulf to his throne, "Audierunt preterea conjuratores prædicti, quod, contra morem et statuta regum West-Saxononum, Judetham * * * reginam appellabat et in mensa ad latus suum convivari faciebat." Vol. i. p. 291.

sent life, he was not forgetful of that termination to existence which is the universal destiny of mankind. He wished especially that no unseemly dispute should arise amongst his children upon the demise of their father, and therefore he had a will drawn up, in which he disposed of all his property of every description. In this will, he bequeathed his kingdom to his two eldest sons; his hereditary property he divided between his sons, his daughters, and even his relations; and then he imposed, by a writing in regular form, the duty upon his children and even his nobles, of having a due partition made of his money, for the repose of his soul.* Upon this last proviso, the result of a prudent consideration, it is necessary to state a few of the particulars, as a fitting example to posterity; in order that they may the better comprehend, what is most needful, and what the best calculated to promote the salvation of the soul. Ethelwulf, who from the very earliest bloom of youth had ever studied, in all the actions of his life, to work out his salvation, commanded by his last will that in all the domains which were his by right of inheritance, one out of every ten should be devoted to the sustentation of the poor, whether natives, or strangers, and to supply them with food, drink and clothing.† This

---

* "Pecuniarum quoque, quæ post se superessent propter animam suam, et filios et etiam nobiles suos, divisionem ordinabiliter litteris mandare procuravit."—ASSER.

† "Per omnem hæreditariam terram suam semper in X manentibus unum pauperem, aut indigenam aut peregrinum, cibu, potu et vestimento."—ASSER.

"In omni suæ hereditatis decima hida pauperem vestiri et cibari præcepit."—W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii., §. 113.

"Per omne regnum suum semper in decem hidis vel mansionibus pauperem unum indigenam vel peregrinum cibu, potu et operimento."—ROG. DE WEND.

he imposed as a sacred duty to be fulfilled by his successors, from his decease to the day of judgment, whilst at the same time, it was provided that the land allocated for the poor should be occupied both by tillers and cattle, so that it might never become deserted, nor uncultivated. He desired also for the benefit of his soul, that there should be yearly sent to Rome three hundred mancusses. One hundred of these was to be devoted to the special honour of St. Peter—for the purchase of oil, wherewith to supply all the lights* in the Apostle's church upon the eve of Easter Sunday, until three o'clock the next morning—the second was to be given in honour of St. Paul, to maintain his church with lights on the same day, and for the same period of time, and the third hundred mancusses were to be presented to him, who is the Universal, and Apostolical Pope† as an aid to the Pontiff in his usual distribution of alms.‡

"He ordained, that throughout all his own hereditary lands, every ten families shall maintain one poor person with meat, drink, and apparel; from whence came the *corrodies* which still remain in divers places."—BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 77. A "*corrody*," is defined by Johnson to be "a defalcation from an allowance or salary from some other than the original purpose, see *Dictionary* (folio ed.) The old application of "a corrody" is thus stated in the Monasticum Anglicanum, vol. i. p. 149. "Abbas et monachi ejus loci per totum annum post obitum suum totum conredium, sicut in vita sua perceperint, habere debent, quod *alicui indigenti pro anima sua* erogabitur." See DUCANGE in verb. "*conredium.*"

* Upon the ancient practise with respect to lights in churches, see MARCULFI *Formularum*, lib. i §. 2. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol, iv. p. 469 B and note (c.) BIGNONIUS, *Not. in Marculf*, pp. 252, 253, (Paris, 1666.)

† ASSER, *Annal.* pp. 157, 158.

‡ "Ad suas eleemosynas ampliandas." ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 293.

Ethelwulf died in the year 858.* He had generously bestowed, as a mark of his sincere affection for the church of Winchester, the vill of Chyltecombe, with its appurtenances, upon it, for the sustenance of its monks. He also displayed his munificence in presenting many ecclesiastical ornaments to that ancient monastery, in which his venerated remains were afterwards with due honour interred.†

---

* *Chron. Mailros*, p. 143. Probably in January 858, see HARDY's notes on Wm. of Malmsbury, vol. i. p. 174, note 6. COXE's notes on Roger de Wendover, vol. i. p. 294, note 1. ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 92, § 2, 3, 4. LINGARD's *History of England*, vol. i. p. 254.

† RUDBORNE, *Hist. Mag.*, lib. iii., c. 2. *Ang. Sax.* vol. i. p. 202. See with respect to the interment of Ethelwulf, INGRAM's *Sax. Chron.* pp. 378, 379. Some interesting facts as to interments in religious houses will be found in HEARNE's Preface to Robert of Gloucester, pp. xxxix, xlii. Proofs of the munificence of King Ethelwulf are given in THORN. *Chron.* pp. 2126, 2127, *Evidens. Ecc. Cantuar*, pp. 2217, 2218. W. MALMSB. *Antiq. Glaston.* p. 316. KEMBLE's *Codex Diplomaticus*, vol. ii. nos. ccxli, ccxlvi, cclii, cclv, &c., &c.

CHAPTER II.

THE REIGNS OF ATHELBALD, ETHELBERT, AND ETHERED.

ATHELBALD ascends the throne.. Duration of his reign. Ethelbert becomes King of Kent. Marriage of Athelbald with queen Judith.. she is repudiated upon the advice of St. Swithin .. Repentance and death of Athelbald. Ethelbert succeeds to Athelbald, and unites Kent with the West Saxon throne. Attack on Winchester by the Danes.. Their defeat by the English. The death of St. Swithin.. An account of his virtues and miracles. The English in Rome in the year 864.. Interesting anecdotes respecting them. The Northmen in 865.. their treachery punished. (First collection of Danegelt). Death of king Ethelbert. The three unfortunate reigns of three brothers. King Ethered's bravery in his battles against the Northmen. England invaded in 866. The story of Osbrith, king of Northumbria, and of Bruern Bocard. The infamy of the king and its fatal consequences. Inguar and Hubba land in England. Kings Osbrith and Ella, slain by the Danes. Marriage of Alfred. The Danes in Nottingham. Repeated famines. The cruelties of the Danes. The holy Abbess Ebba and the female martyrs of Coldingham convent. Monasteries destroyed by the invaders. Great battle between the Danes and the monks and men of Croyland. Narrative by an eye witness of

the events that occurred at the destruction of Croyland, Destruction of Peterborough monastery. Destruction of the monastery of Ely. The Danes in East Anglia. Ragnar Lodbroc, the father of Inguar and Hubba. The deeds of cruelty perpetrated in Thetford by Inguar. Battle at Thetford between Inguar and St. Edmund. The latter retires to Hoxon.. the former receives reinforcements. The martyrdom of the holy King Edmund. The head of the martyr miraculously discovered. The Northmen defeated at Englefield. The battle of Ashdown. King Ethered refuses to move against the enemy until he has heard mass.. the Northmen defeated by him. Various battles between the Northmen and England. King Ethered wounded mortally, expires, and is interred at Winburn. Revolts of the Mercians and Northumbrians. Spoliations of the church committed by Burhred king of the Mercians.

CHAPTER II.

ATHELBALD, ETHELBERT, AND ETHERED.

A.D. 858—871.

ATHELBALD the son of Ethelwulf, succeeded to the throne, upon the death of his father, in the year 858.* He reigned as a king for five years,† that is, he occupied a throne for two years and a half during the life time of his father, and acted as a sovereign for two years and a half subsequent to his father's death.‡ He obtained the West Saxon crown on his father's demise, whilst Ethelwulf's son Ethelbert, succeeded as king, over Kent, Essex, Surrey and Sussex.§

---

* *Chron. Mailros*, p. 143, (Gale).

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ ASSER, *Annal.* p. 158.

§ *Saxon Chronicle.* Herr Lappenberg must have been forgetful of this statement in the Saxon Chronicle, when he thus wrote as to Essex being attached to the kingdom of Kent:—

"It seems doubtful to me whether Essex still belonged to this

Upon the death of his father, Athelbald was guilty of an outrage, that was not merely an offence against God,

---

kingdom (Kent) as ASSER, A.D. 860, makes no mention of it." *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 27, note 4, (THORPE's *Translation.*)

In this year the *Annales Bertiniani* assure us that the Northmen were defeated in Scotland. "Scotti super Normannos irruentes auxilio Domini nostri Jesu Christi victores eos a suis finibus propellunt. *Unde* et rex Scottorum ad Carolum pacis et amicitiæ gratia legatos cum muneribus misit, *viam sibi petendi Romam*, concedi deposcent." *Ann. Bert.* 848. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 65.

In this year (858) the Emperor Louis led, as a mark of respect for the Pope, the animal on which the Pontiff rode, by the bridle.

——"frenumque Cæsar equi Pontificis suis manibus adprehendens pedestri more, quantum sagittae ictus extenditur, traxit * * * Imperator equo descendit, equumque Pontificis *iterum*, ut meminimus supra, traxit." In Vita Nicolai I. Papæ. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 327. See Anastasius Bibliothecarius in MURATORI. *Rer. Ital. Script.* vol. iii. p. 253. As this fact might, perhaps, be regarded as a proof of the pride and haughtiness of the Pope, we cannot refrain from stating another circumstance respecting him, which is mentioned by Anastasius, and that is, that the holy Pontiff devised the means, by which he secured to the poor and helpless in Rome, subsistence and relief:—

"Hic Christi amicus omnium nomina claudorum, cœcorum, atque ex toto debilium in urbe Roma consistentium scripta apud se retinens quotidianum illis victum ministrare studiose curabat. Nam reliquis pauperibus gressum, aut vires habentibus hujuscemodi, ut vicissim eos pasceret sapienter, reperit modum, scilicit bullas suo nomine titulatas fieri jussit, et has eis dari præcepit." MURATORI. *Rer. Ital. Script.* vol. iii. p. 258.

In the *Annales Bertiniani* of this year, there is stated a circumstance as having occurred which affords an insight into the manner in which the armour of warriors, and the trappings of war-steeds were decorated. It is said that a species of marine tree was cast upon the coast, which had no leaves, but something like a broad herbage adhering to its branches, which was covered with thin triangular shaped substances, like to men's nails, or fishes scales, and that had the appearance of being fastened on to the herbage, in the same manner that party-coloured metals were attached to the belts of men, and the head-gear of horses—"More eorum, qui ex diversis metallis in ornamentis cingulorum vel homi-

and a degradation to his own dignity as a Christian, but which was opposed to the manners of every Pagan nation,

---

num, vel equestrium falearum, extrinsecus adfigi solent." *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 73.

The German monkish writers place a curious legend as occurring during this year at Bingen. It is interesting as a legend, and also as exhibiting the horror felt in those times for the violation of his vows by any one in holy orders.

"In a certain village," says the Annals of Fulda, "not far distant from Bingen, and which is called Caput-montum, because it is there begin the mountains through which run the waters of the Rhine, and which is now corruptly designated *Cammunzi*, an evil spirit gave proof of its malignity. At first, it rendered itself an object of terror by throwing stones at and striking the walls of the houses as if they were beaten by a mallet, afterwards it was heard to speak plainly, and to tell where things that had been secretly stolen were privately hidden, and afterwards to foment disputes and incite quarrels between the inhabitants of the place; and at last it excited the enmity of all against one particular man, as if his sins were so great that they brought down upon his neighbours the punishments with which they were afflicted; and as if for the purpose of making him most odious, there was no house in which the man could place his foot, which the evil spirit did not knock down. Hence the man was compelled by necessity to live with his wife and children in the open fields, as his relatives and acquaintances were afraid to let him under a roof belonging to them. But even in the fields the man was not allowed to be safe; for when he had gathered in his harvest, and collected it in heaps together, the evil spirit coming unexpectedly upon him, set all on fire. The man, however, being conscious that his neighbours desired to put him to death, determined to remove from their minds any enmity, or suspicion they might entertain respecting him, voluntarily exposed himself to the ordeal of hot iron, as demonstrative proof that he was innocent of every crime that could or might be alleged against him. There was therefore sent from the city of Mayence, priests and deacons with relics and crosses, who expelled the evil spirit from that place; but whilst the clergy were engaged in saying the litanies, and sprinkling holy water in a certain house which had been the most exposed to its fury, the old enemy of mankind wounded not a few of the persons belonging to the village by casting stones at them. In a short time it ceased its molestations and remained tranquil.

and must be esteemed even as an infamy to mention amongst all mankind, who cannot hear of it but with abhorrence; for he placed upon his throne, and even called her his wife, who as the Princess Judith had been united in the bonds of marriage with his own father!*

At length, the holy exhortations of the most blessed

After those who had been sent to this place had departed, the same enemy was heard by many persons to give vent to wailing words that were truly doleful to listen to, for mentioning a certain person by name, it declared that it sheltered itself under that person's cowl all the time that the house was sprinkled with holy water; and when the persons present, with fear and trembling, blessed themselves with the sign of the cross, the same enemy of mankind, alluding to the same priest it had before referred to, added—"Yes, that priest is my slave, for he who is conquered "becomes the slave of the conqueror, as he is mine, ever since "he obeyed my instigation by an act of impurity with a female "of this village." A fact which was known to no mortal but the two criminals themselves, and which is another proof how truly it is stated in scripture that there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed. As to the apostate spirit, it continued for the course of three years to work similar deeds of mischief, and never ceased until nearly every house in the village had been burned down. *Annales Fuldensis,* ad an. 858. See *Annal. Mettensis.* a. 858. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. pp. 168, 169. *Sigebert. Gemblac. Chron.* a. 858. PISTOR. *Veter. Script. German,* p. 566. (Frankfort, 1583).

The person who may be disposed to consider the above narrative of the *superstitions* credited during "the dark ages," and who may be under the impression that such folly can find no believers in countries which have been visited by "the reformation of the sixteenth century," will be astonished to learn that at Stockwell, in the county of Surrey, events very similar in their character to those mentioned above are affirmed to have occurred in the year 1772, see CROWE'S *Night Side of Nature,* vol. ii. pp. 210, 22d ed. (London, 1849), and such too are even affirmed to have happened so late as the year 1840, at Willington near Newcastle-on-Tyne, see same vol. pp. 106, 127; see also HORST *Zauber-Bibliothek,* vol. iii. p. 233.

* ASSER, *Annal.* p. 158. *Vit. Ælf.* p. 4. S. DUNELM, pp. 121, 140. ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 294. F. WIGORN. p. 584.

father St. Swithin aroused the conscience of the king, and made him feel how great was the sin into which he had fallen. He separated from his step-mother*—he did penance—and for the remaining period of time, that it was permitted him to live, he governed his kingdom in peace and justice. Such was the effect of the great humility of St. Swithin, that whatsoever he advised kings or princes to do for the salvation of their own souls, they unmurmuringly, unhesitatingly, nay, even heartily acted upon that advice, and did their utmost to fulfil it.

At the suggestion of St. Swithin, the old monastery of Winchester was placed in a state of defence against the hostile incursions of the Danes, by Athelbald.†

The premature death of Athelbald excited the universal grief of the English people, as the body of the youthful sovereign was borne to its place of interment at Sherborne. England afterwards felt how much she had lost in being deprived of him.‡

---

* "Dimissa Juditha noverca sua." RUDBORNE. The same words are used by Roger de Wendover, A.D. 859, vol. i. p. 295. Judith subsequently left England, and whilst remaining at Senlis, was taken from it by Baldwin, Count of Flanders, to whom she was married, and through the intercession of the Pope, that marriage sanctioned by her father. One of the descendants of Baldwin and Judith was Matilda, the wife of William I. See *Annal. Bert.*, ad an. 862, 863, c. v. FLODOARD. *Chron.* c. 12. *Chron. Sithiens. S. Bertin*, c. 15, NICOLAI PAP. Epist. X., *Capit. Carli. Calvi*, v. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. pp. 77, 83, 214, 268, 391, 650. ALFORD, *Annal. Eccl. Ang.* vol. iii. pp. 100, 101.

† RUDBORN. *Hist. Mag.*, lib. iii. c. 3, p. 204. This was in consequence of an invasion of the Danes in 850-1, who were then defeated. See *Ann. Bert*, 850. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 66.

‡ ——— "Morte immatura præreptus est, planxit autem

In the year 860,* Ethelbert, the brother of Athelbald, became king of the West Saxons, and united, as he was justly entitled to do, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, with his dominions.† Ethelbert was a most valiant young warrior, the ever invincible conqueror of the Danes, and during the five years that his reign lasted, always gallantly maintained his kingdom against foreign invasion.‡ It was in his reign, that a great army of Pagans landed upon the coast, advanced to the city of Winchester, took it by storm and laid it waste;§ but as the invaders, who had

---

omnis Anglia Adelbaldi regis juventutem, et factus est luctus vehemens super eum: et sepelierunt eum apud Sireburne. Sensitque posthac Anglia quantum amiserit in eo." H. HUNT. *Hist.*, lib. v. p. 348. See W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 117. HIGDEN *Polychron*, p. 254. ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. i. p. 842. R. DE DICET., p. 450. BROMTON, p. 808.

In the year 859, particular honour was shown in France to the relics of St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, whose memory must be ever dear to Englishmen. King Charles, upon the day of the Epiphany, proceeded to the tomb of the Saint—— "Hinc maturans negotium, plenum reverentiæ sepulchrum aperuit, membra pretiossissima, perinde ut pridem, integra supplicibus oculis conspicatus, congruo honore veneratus est. Posthæc corpus venerabile solis Pontificium passus manibus contrectari, operosis denuo palliis decenter ambivit * * * eo loci, quo nunc veneratur et excolitur, larga ambitione, ingenti gloria, principali denique reverentia transpositum collocavit." *Mirac. S. German. Episc. Autissiodor.*, c. 9. The piety exhibited by Charles the Bald was speedily rewarded by Heaven. See c. 10, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 356.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† ASSER, *Ann.*, p. 158, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 4.

‡ INGULPHUS *Hist.*, p. 18. (Gale.)

§ The manner in which Henry of Huntingdon alludes to the destruction of Winchester is brief, but characteristic of the patriotic monk:—

collected an immense booty, were retreating to their ships, they were encountered by Osric, the ealdorman of Hampshire, and Adhelwulf of Berkshire, with their united armies. A vigorous attack was at once made upon the spoilers. The battle took place on a spot, that was far removed from every walled town, and the result was that the Pagans were cut down on every side. When the infidels found they were no longer able to resist their assailants, they fled, like so many women from the field of battle, leaving to the Christians a burial ground for their dead, over which, as victors, they might justly rejoice.*

"In diebus ejus venit navalis exercitus, et egredientes destruxerunt Wincestre, et sic.

"Urbs antiqua ruit multos dominata per annos." Lib. v. p. 348.

* Asser, *Annal.*, p. 58, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 4. This victory over the Danes certainly took place either late in the year 860, or early in 861. Asser and the Saxon Chronicle both mention it under the date 860. Asser commences his account of it, with the words "in cujus diebus:" the Saxon Chronicle—"and on his daege." The Chronicle of the Northmen however puts this point beyond dispute, for it not only tells us the time of the invasion, but also the name of the Viking, by whom the invasion was conducted:—

"Anno Domini DCCCLX Northmanni in Somma flumine consistentes, receptis obsidibus, ad Anglos-Saxones navigant a quibus repulsi, alias partes petunt——."

"A.D. DCCCLXI * * Alii quoque Northmannorum * * * de Angliâ revertentes. Deinde cum *duce eorum Welando*———" *Chron. de Nortman. Gest. Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 154.

See also *Annal. Bertin.* ad an. 860, 861. It may be interesting to the English reader to know, what was the fate of Weland, whose barbarities in Winchester so much afflicted St. Swithin as to hasten his death. See Alford, vol. iii. p. 98, § 2. We learn that Weland pretended to become a Christian, was accused of treason by one of his associates, and killed in a duel by his

In the year 861, died the bishop St. Swithin.* This saint had, in his boyish days, which were passed in the pure simplicity of innocence, expressed the desire to have imposed upon him the yoke of servitude to God alone.† That yoke was received and ever courageously borne by him. Once admitted amongst those whose lives were to be passed in the service of religion, he rose from order to order, advancing each day from virtue to virtue, with God as his guide and director, until at length, he was elevated by Helmstan, Bishop of Winchester, to the honours of the priesthood.‡ As a priest, it was his constant study, to

---

accuser. See *Annal. Bertin*, ad an. 863. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. pp. 83, 84.

"Dani qui pridem Morinum civitatem incenderant, de Anglia revertentes duce Welando, cum ducentis et eo amplius navibus per Sequanam ascendunt, et castellum in insula quæ Oscellus dicitur, a Nortmannis constructum, et *eosdem Nortmannis obsident.*" *Annal. Bertin.* an. 861. This extract is deserving of observation, first, because it proves how early dissensions arose amongst the various bands of plundering invaders; and secondly, because it also reminds us of the noble answer given by Pope Nicholas to the Bishop of Terouanne (Morinensis) who, when his diocese was invaded by the Northmen, consulted the Pontiff, as to whether he should fly from the place for ever. "Scias," said the Pope, "carissime frater, quod si perniciosum est proretam in tranquillitate navem deserere, quanto magis in fluctibus." *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 77, note *a*. As to dissensions amongst the Northmen, see also TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 540, note 13. *Ann. Bert.* 854. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 76. LEIBNITZ *Annal. Imper.*, vol. i. p. 564.

* *Sax. Chron.* The Rev. ALBAN BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 77, and PINIUS, *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. p. 321, place his death in the year 862.

† GOTZELINUS *Vit. St. Swithun*, § i. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. i. p. 327.

‡ "Itaque in *clerum* adscitus, de gradu in gradum, de virtute in virtutem, gressus ejus Deo per omnia dirigente conscendens, sub Helmstrano Wintano episcopo, ad *sacerdotii* honorem provec-

prove he was a fitting and suitable servant of the Lord, by his expounding in a true and Catholic spirit the Word of Truth; by his mildness, and meekness of demeanour; by his constant practice of works of piety; by his wielding the rod of chastisement against doers of evil; and by his willing devotion to the service of all men, in all conditions of life.

When the fame of his piety reached the ears of the king (Egbert), he was summoned by that monarch to his court, and soon esteemed by the sovereign, as one of his dearest friends. The king even entrusted to him the education of his son Ethelwulf, in order that the prince might acquire a knowledge of every liberal science, whilst his mind and his heart were imbued with the purest principles of morality. The royal pupil subsequently received the order of sub-deacon, through his clerical instructor.* It was, in consequence of the prayers and exhortations of this holy bishop, that Ethelwulf bestowed a tithe of the lands of his kingdom—a beneficent donation, that was conceded in a truly liberal spirit. The same holy bishop also had constructed the bridge on the east side of Winchester; and it so happened, that one day, when he went to see how this work was carried on, for the completion of which he felt a great anxiety, that there passed a poor woman who was carrying a basket of eggs, which she was trying to dispose of. The workmen, seeing this female, assailed her with rude jokes, and in their rough sport dashed to

tus est." GOTZELINUS. The distinction between the aspirants to priesthood, and the priesthood itself, which is to be observed in this sentence, is seldom attended to by modern writers on the ancient discipline of the Catholic church, and its neglect has led to the propagation of many erroneous opinions.

* "Quem postea subdiaconum ordinavit."—GOTZELINUS.

the earth the basket with its contents. The poor creature in tears, with loud sobs and piteous prayers, ran to the bishop, and the holy man, compassionating her sorrow, took in his hand the basket, made the sign of the cross over it, and then gave it back to her, with its contents perfectly restored.* It was, in sooth, but a small proof of his holy life, and compassionate nature.† But what must be told respecting his great humility? Whenever it became necessary for him to consecrate a new church, erected in honour of God, no matter what might be its distance, he travelled all the way thither, neither on horseback nor in any species of carriage, but solely on foot; and lest his so doing should excite a feeling of contempt in the minds of the ignorant, or be ascribed to an ostentatious spirit, by the proud of heart, he hid his conduct from the observation of mankind, by making his pedes-

---

* "Dextra signum crucis exprimit, ovaque incorrupta et integra restituit."—GOTZELINUS, *Vit. S. Swithun*, § 2; *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. p. 327.

If we had any respect for the opinion of infidels, or any fear of their sneers, we should omit this anecdote respecting the good St. Swithin. Without courting their enmity, or inviting their sarcasm, we wish to state, that we insert this miracle, because we find it recited in many monkish historians, who attached value to it, as proving the great compassion for a wretchedly poor woman that filled the heart of a bishop, who was not only the tutor of the reigning sovereign, but also the principal adviser and chief councillor of the crown. In this anecdote, we learn incidentally, that the bishop in building a bridge provided for the accommodation of the people—that his piety and his charity were not confined to prayers and sermons, but made him active, benevolent and even work miracles to appease the grief of a helpless egg woman! When did infidelity from the days of Herod to Hume confer any such benefit upon the poor, as we find recorded in this single act of St. Swithin?

† W. MALMSB. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 242.

trian journies during the darkness of night.* A lover of solitude and sanctity, not one particle of his wealth was ever wasted in pomp or vanity.† The guests at his feasts were not the rich, but the poor and those who were in want.‡ His mouth was ever open to warn sinners that they should do penance. He cautioned those, who believed themselves to be upright in their conduct, to be careful that they should not fall into sin; and those who had fallen he encouraged in their efforts to rise again into grace. Food was taken by him not to gratify his appetite; but always in such scanty portions as were barely sufficient to sustain life. His long vigils, his great labours were relieved but by a short sleep, and his sole relaxation was in the recitation of psalms and holy canticles. That which was proper, was honest, was useful, was pious, was sanctifying for his neighbours and himself to do, were propounded by him in sermons that were characterised by their unpretending and candid simplicity. This blessed man, from the commencement to the close of his life, was

---

* Mr. Collier, in his Ecclesiastical History, thus apologizes for St. Swithin's "private way of living," and refusing "the attendance of a pompous train."

"But then," observes Mr. Collier, "St. Swithin had the privilege of working miracles: this was a shining distinction, this guarded his character, and commanded respect much more effectually than all the glitter of wealth and equipage. A prelate that has *this advantage*, needs nothing farther to support his character. *In other cases*, the authority of the church, *as well as that of the state*, must be kept up by customary marks of honour, by something that strikes the senses, and makes an impression of regard on the minds of the generality."—*Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. p. 375.

† W. Malmsb. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 242.

‡ "Ad convivia sua accersebat non locupletes, sed egenos et pauperes."—Gotzelinus, *Vit. S. Swithun*, § 3.

a strict and true observer of God's commandments—preserving his heart in all things, in perfect cleanness and spiritual purity. Of every point that related to the catholic and apostolic doctrine, he was an incorruptible guardian; whilst of those who were his children in the regeneration of baptism, he was the ever diligent teacher, preceptor and model of a life of sanctification. Beyond all other things he loved and practised meekness and humility. He sought for sanctity and peace—he thirsted after the fountain of life and of everlasting beatitude; and so at last happily passed from this world to the starry mansion of heaven on the second day of July, in the year of our salvation 862. In dying, he had directed that his body should be buried not inside, but outside the walls of the church, as if it were only fitted to be laid in some mean and lowly place.*

After his decease the saint was glorified with many miracles, amongst which may be mentioned his appearing to a certain man† who was afflicted with a most terrible infirmity in all his limbs. The man was told by St. Swithin, that he should go to Ethelwold the then Bishop of Winchester, and apprise him, that it was the will of Divine Providence that his (St. Swithin's) remains should be

---

* Gotzelinus, *Vit. S. Swithun*, § 3. Malmsbury explains that St. Swithin desired this to be done, because it was his wish, that the rains of heaven might fall upon his grave, and the feet of man trample upon it:—"Pontificali authoritate præcepit astantibus, ut extra ecclesiam cadaver suum humarent: ubi et pedibus prætereuntium, et stillicidiis ex alto rorantibus esset obnoxium."—*Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 242.

† This man was a poor mechanic, a smith. See *Historia translationis S. Swithun*, c. i. §§ 2, 3. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. p. 329.

taken from the grave in which they had been interred and removed to the inside of the church, and there deposited in a place indicative of the respect and honour that should be paid to them. The man was assured that the proof of the truth of what was said to him should be afforded that very hour, in his perfect restoration to health, from the disease under which he had been so long suffering. It was also added, that when he came to the place of St. Swithin's interment, power would be given to him to extract, without any injury to the stone of the tomb, one of the iron rings that had been fastened into it, and again to restore the ring as it had been before, and precisely in the same state. The man did arise from his bed perfectly cured: all that had been foretold to him came to pass, and all were strictly and accurately narrated by him to the bishop.

When the bishop, Ethelwold, raised from the earth the body of St. Swithin, the senses of all present were pervaded with a most sweet and fragrant odour; a blind woman was on the instant restored to sight, and many afflicted with various diseases, were cured through his merits. The translation of St. Swithin took place in the one hundred and tenth year from his decease, and on the 15th July, 971. The same day St. Swithin cured of his deformity, a boy whose limbs from his birth had been contracted; he restored their vision to three women who had lost it; he broke the bonds in prison of a female who lay there fettered with chains of iron; he cured a paralytic; he gave sight to a noble dame who was blind; he in one day made perfectly well five-and-twenty men who had come from various parts of the country, and were differently affected; another day, he gave relief to some blind

persons, and to three women with crippled limbs; in the course of three days, health was bestowed by him on thirty six persons suffering under opposite and complicated diseases, and subsequently, in less than one fortnight, one hundred and twenty-four persons were cured by him.*

For the space of five months scarcely a day passed away in which some sick persons were not cured upon approaching the honored relics of this saint.† Sometimes there were three, sometimes five, now seven, then ten, then twelve, and then fifteen. *We have seen* more than two hundred sick persons, in the course of ten days, cured through the merits of this saint, whilst those so cured in the course of a year were innumerable.‡ *We have seen* the streets around the monastery so crowded upon all sides by the throngs of the sick, that it was difficult for a person to make his way through them to its gates, and yet in the course of a few days afterwards, such was the grace and mercy of God, exhibited in the merits of this saint, that scarcely five ailing persons could be remarked in the church.§ Wherefore, upon such a matter as this, that

---

* Gotzelinus, *Vit. S. Swithun*, § 3, 4, 5. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. pp. 327, 328.

† *Hist. Translation. S. Swithun*, c. ii. § 107. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. p. 330.

‡ "*Vidimus* namque plusquam ducentos in decem diebus ægrotos per meritum sancti curatos, et in anni circulo, qui carent numero." *Hist. Translation. S. Swithun*, c. ii. § 7. The work from which this extract is taken, is attributed by the Rev. Alban Butler, to Lantfred, a monk of Winchester, who wrote the account of the translation of St. Swithin in 980. See *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. pp. 77, 78.

§ *Miracula S. Swithun*, c. i. § 1. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. p. 331.

which is most befitting is silence on the part of the malignant and the reprobate, who are disposed either to deny the glorious miracles of St. Swithin, or, who not being able to deny are disposed to disparage them.* Wherefore also, let those who are now unbelievers betake themselves to this saint of God, learn to know the blessings the Lord can bestow upon them, and to praise their Creator.† Finally, let those who belong to the faith, here observe, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who in the beginning of this era, clothed Himself with human flesh, gave light to the blind, restored hearing to the deaf, and walked dry-foot on the sea, has also in these our days, as a proof of His omnipotent and supreme command, and for a manifestation of the merits of the most excellent priest, Swithin, bestowed the blessing of health upon the bodies of so many sick persons, that they may be considered as like to the sands of the sea, in numbers, numberless. Blessed be the Almighty God, who has deigned to glorify our days with the signs and virtues of his saint: for this be praise given to Him who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, lives and reigns for ever and for ever.—Amen.‡

---

*"Quapropter invicti sileant, ac reprobi, qui gloriosa hujus sancti miracula, aut negant, aut quod negare nequeunt, in sinistram partem vertunt." *Miracula S. Swithun*, c. i. § 1. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. p. 331.

† Quapropter increduli ad Sanctum Dei veniant, ut beneficia Conditoris agnoscant, et Creatorem laudant." *Hist. Translation. S. Swithun*, c. ii. § 7.

‡ *Hist. Translation. S. Swithun*, c. ii. § 8. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. i. p. 330. See with respect to St. Swithin and the innumerable

During the pontificate of Nicholas, numbers attracted by the fame of his sanctity repaired to him.* Some of those who thus came to Rome, were inhabitants of England, and these (in the year 864), placed a silver table, weighing a great many pounds, in the oratory of the blessed pope and confessor Gregory, which was constructed in the sacred church of the Prince of the Apostles.†

---

miracles performed through his intercession, same vol. of the *Acta Sanctorum*, pp. 321, 337. BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. pp. 76, 77, 78. LELAND'S *Collectanea*, vol. i. pp. 21, 22, 153, 154, 155, 156. WILLIAM OF MALMSBURY, (*Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 244), testifies to his being an eye-witness to a miracle affected through the intercession of St. Swithin. See also RUDBORNE'S *Hist. Mag.*, pp. 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 223. F. WIGORN, A.D. 862. R. DE WEND. vol. i. pp. 296, 297. CAPGRAVE, *Nov. Legend. Ang.* p. cclxxviii. HARPSFIELD, *Hist. Eccl. Ang. Non. Sæc.* c. viii. pp. 168, 169. *Britannia Sancta*, vol. ii. pp. 4, 7. ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 99, § 4. DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. i. pp. 189, 192, 194.

* ANASTASIUS BIBLIOTHECARIUS, *Vit. Rom. Pont.* MURATORI, *Rer. Ital. Scrip.*, vol. iii. p. 258.

† Ibid.

In placing this incident in the year 864, we follow the chronology of BARONIUS, vol. xv. p. 13, § 31, as it is adopted by ALFORD, *Annal. Ecc. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 100, § 2. It is a proof of the piety of the English, and their veneration for the memory of the great and good pope, St. Gregory, through whose zeal the Anglo-Saxons were first converted to Christianity. The fact that there were many English at Rome in this year, is confirmed by another authority, which states, upon an assault being made by the guards of the wicked emperor Louis, upon the clerical attendants of the pope, one of the crosses was dashed to the earth—it enclosed the wood of the true cross, discovered by the English empress, St. Helena, and on this occasion, in the year 864, it seemed to be the will of Heaven, that the piety of the English pilgrims in Rome should be rewarded, by their hands being permitted to collect the

In the year 865 * the Pagan Northmen or Danes

---

scattered particles of the sacred wood, and restore them to their proper guardians:—

"DCCCLXIV. * * * In quo tumultu et crux mirabilis et veneranda a sanctæ memoriæ Helena, decentissime fabricata, in qua lignum mirificæ crucis posuit, et Sancto Petro munere maximo contulit, confracta et in lutum projecta est. Unde a quibusdam, ut fertur, Anglorum gentis hominibus collecta, et custodibus reddita est." HINCMAR. *Remensis Annal.* MONUMENT, *German Histor.* vol. i. p. 363. (PERTZ), *Rer. Gall. et Fran. Script.* vol. vii. p. 84, see also p. 157.

It is difficult to discover in the original writers of the middle ages, such a title as that of a married clergyman—"clericus conjugatus." Under the date of this year (864), we find it used, however, in the *Annales Bertiniani*, and applied to a person of high rank, the brother of the Empress Theotberga. This "clericus conjugatus," was slain in the year 865, as a rebel to his sovereign, having intruded himself into a monastery and lands, contrary to the will of the Emperor Louis. "Hugbertus *clericus conjugatus et Abbas* monasterii sancti Martini, qui sancti Mauricii abbatiam, et alios honores Hludowici imperatoris Italiæ contra voluntatem ipsius tenebat, ab hominibus ejus occiditur." *Annal. Bertin.* a. 864. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 88. None of the ancient authors say one word in favour of this "clericus conjugatus." On the contrary, he is described in the *Annales Mettenenses*, a. 866, as the leader of a band of robbers, "Collecta quippe prædonum valida manu, rapinas cœpit exercere," a. 866. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 194; and Pope Benedict III., in a letter addressed to the archbishops and bishops, to inquire into the conduct of this "clericus conjugatus," states, that amongst other charges preferred against him was, that "the married clergyman" was the associate of infamous women, and sacrilegiously violated with them the sanctity of more than one monastery, "*quod cum scenicis muliebris quotidie* degere non dubitet * * * quod monasterium * * tanta ferocitate pervasit, ut nullus jam priscæ religionis in eo ordo servetur. Et quia monasterium in commemoratione B. Petri Luxovii constitutum, cujus claustri aditus mulieribus nunquam patuit, hostili modo ingressus, cum *illicitis muliebris* per aliquot dies commorari non trepidavit." *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 384, see note (*c*). Such was a "clericus conjugatus" in the ninth century! See same vol. *Annal. Mett.* p. 189, and p. 194, note (*a*). *Chron. Verdun.* p. 247, and *Chron. Sigebert*, p. 251.

* *Saxon Chronicle.*

established their winter quarters in the Isle of Thanet, and whilst there entered into a solemn compact with the men of Kent.* The conditions of this compact were, that the men of Kent should pay a certain sum to the Northmen, if they faithfully adhered to their engagement.† The Pagans, however, with a fox-like treachery, broke up their encampment by night, violated the treaty, spurned from them with scorn the sum of money they had stipulated to receive, because they knew they were more likely to obtain a larger sum by furtive thievery, than by honest peace, and then in their devastating progress depopulated the entire of the eastern coast of Kent,‡ as soon however as the warriors of Kent could be collected together, those perfidious violators of the treaty were expelled from the country.§

Ethelbert, the king of the West Saxons, and the brother

---

* Asser *Annal.* p. 158. *Vit. Ælf.* p. 4.

† Such stipulations were common in every country afflicted with the visitations of the Northmen. They were paid to abstain from plundering. One instance out of many may be quoted; because we find in it, the first trace of the principle of the *Danegelt* so long collected in England:

"Anno Domini DCCCLXIX. Karolus cum Northmannis in quatuor millium libris argenti pensam eorum paciscitur: et indicta per regnum suum collectione ad idem exsolvendum tributum, de unoquoque manso ingenuili exiguntur sex denarii, et de servili tres, et de accolis unus, et de duobus hospitibus unus; et decima de omnibus quæ negotiatores videbantur habere. Sed et a Presbyteris secundum quod unusquisque habuit, vectigal exigitur, et herbanni de omnibus Francis accipiuntur." *Chron. de Nortman. Gest.* See also *Annal. Bertin,* ad an. 866, and *Annal. Fulden,* 867.

‡ Asser, *Ann.* p. 158. *Vit. Ælf.* p. 4.

§ "Quapropter, coacto cœtu, fœdifragos expulere." W.

of Athelbald, who for five years had reigned in peace, beloved and honored, expired in the year 863, to the great grief of all his subjects, and was with all due respect, and every befitting honor interred at Sherborne, where his remains were placed by the side of his brother.*

The same year (866) in which Ethelbert died, his brother Ethered undertook the government of the West Saxon kingdom.† Ethered, the son of Ethelwulf, was destined to govern this kingdom for the same number of years as his brothers.‡ The fate of these brothers might be regarded as miserable—their career as lamentable—their reigns as unfortunate, because all terminated with a premature death; if it were not, that these youthful sovereigns might have well preferred, amid the calamities that on all sides beset their country, an early and an honorable death, to the bitter disgrace of being kings without power, and rulers without influence.§ Bravely

---

MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 117. This author intimates that it was a remnant of the Danish force which had been defeated near Winchester in 860, that sustained this second defeat in 865.

* ASSER, *Ann.* p. 158. *Vit. Ælf.* p. 5. See S. DUNELM: pp. 121, 140. R. DE DICET. p. 450. W. THORN. *Chron.* p. 1776. R. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 297. *Chron. Mailros*, 864, p. 143.

† ASSER, *Ann.* p. 158.

‡ "Ethelredus filius Ethelwulfi regnum patrium obtinuit, eodem numero annorum quo fratres." W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 118.

§ This is a paraphrase of the author's words: "regii pueri magis optarent honestum exitum quam acerbum imperium."

and boldly did each of them battle in defence of his country, and if that defence were not successful, the result cannot be imputed to any want of courage in them. For instance, this fact is recorded of King Ethered, that in the course of a single year he fought nine pitched battles against the enemy; not on all occasions with success; but most frequently victorious; whilst in the many skirmishes, which he conducted with the skill of an accomplished general, he repeatedly routed and cut to pieces those migratory spoilers. We know, that by him, and his forces, there was destroyed on the part of the Danes, nine earls, one king, and a countless number of soldiers.*

The same year in which Ethered ascended the throne, an immense army of the heathens arrived in England,† and fixed their winter quarters in East Anglia.‡ There horses were speedily procured for them,§ and those who formed a host of infantry were speedily converted, almost to a man, into an army of cavalry.‖ Peace however was

---

* W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 118.

† "De Danubio." F. WIGORN, p. 585. "De Danubio," ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 5. "De Danubia," R. DE HOVEDEN, *Ann.* p. 415.

‡ *Sax. Chron.* A. D. 866.

§ "And thær gehorsude wurdon." *Sax. Chron.*

‖ "Ibique ille exercitus maxima ex parte equestris factus est." ASSER, *Ann.* 158.—"Ubi et maxima pars eorum qui pedites erant equestres effecti sunt." M. WEST. p. 160. See F. WIGORN. p. 585, ad an. 866, "Whereas it often occurs in the stories of these rovers that got horse and become horse-men, we must understand it, only for their speedy transport, and that their service was like their ancestors' for the most part ever on foot." SPELMAN'S *Life of Ælfred*, book i. § 38, p. 32. See LAING'S *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 38.

established between them and the inhabitants of East Anglia.*

The Danes passed in the following year from East Anglia across the mouth of the Humber amongst the Northumbrians, and advanced as far as York.† At this period of time there raged a frightful discord amongst the Northumbrians—one that seemed to have been incited and promoted by the devil—such discord as ever prevails amongst a people who have incurred the just wrath of the Almighty.‡

The King of Northumbria at this time was named Osbrith.§ This sovereign chanced to be one day engaged hunting in a forest; and on his return home passed near to the mansion of one of his ealdormen, Bruern Brocard, by name. The king determined to rest in this mansion for a short time, and take some refreshment. The Ealdorman Brocard, never supposing that the king would pay such a visit, was absent from home—engaged in what was his daily practice—inspecting the ports and creeks lest they should be infested by pirates or plunderers.‖

The wife of the ealdorman, who was a dame of ex-

---

* *Sax. Chron.* "Perendinantes igitur in hyeme in *Estangle* inducias et equos ab iis acceperunt, et quietis gratia fortitudini suæ ad tempus pepercerunt." H. Hunt. *Hist.* lib. v. p. 348. This author states that Inguar and Hubba were the leaders of this body of invaders.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ Asser *Ann.* p. 159.

§ Bromton *Chron.* p. 802.

‖ That is, he was guarding the coasts against the dreaded incursions of the Northmen, who had certainly been in England previous to this period. See Snorro *Inglinga Saga*, c. 45, vol. i. p. 52. Turner's *Anglo Saxon History*, vol. i. pp. 464, 465.

traordinary beauty, received the sovereign with an hospitality, which was befitting to the royal rank of her guest. He repaid this kindness with brutal and perfidious violence, and then instantly retired to York, abandoning the lady to shame and grief, which speedily destroyed those charms for which she had been distinguished. Her husband upon his return home enquired the cause of the sad change he beheld, and she at once stated what had occurred—exposing to him the infamous and ruffian conduct of the king. Her husband bade her be comforted —"Be not," said he, "my beloved, afflicted with sorrow, "because you had not strength equal to that of a mis- "creant. I know your truthfulness, and will not prize "you less than I have ever done—but now, with the "will of God, a fitting vengeance shall be taken on him "who has injured alike both you and me. It is for me "to consider how that vengeance can be the most speedily "and effectually wreaked."

This Bruern Brocard was an ealdorman of the highest rank, and of the greatest influence—he was connected with the noblest families in the kingdom, and he convoked as speedily as possible, all his great kindred, and illustrious relatives, to whom he stated the dishonour that had been done to him by the king, and the determination that animated him to exact vengeance for such an insult.

It was then, after a due consultation with his relations, and kinsmen, that he proceeded with them to the city of York. As soon as the king beheld Bruern Brocard, he courteously invited him to approach ;* but Bruern, sur-

* "Ad se curialiter ipsum vocavit." BROMTON. See DUCANGE in verb. "*curialiter.*"

rounded as he was, with his relatives and friends, distrusted the fair speeches of the monarch, and declared that he then and there repudiated all homage, and lealty to Osbrith—renounced the lands, and whatever else he derived from the crown; and never henceforth, would hold any thing from him, as his lord. With these words, and with these words only, he, without making any further delay, retired from the king's presence. He then, with the permission of his friends, made all haste to Denmark, and upon his arrival at that court, complained to the Danish sovereign of the dishonour that had been done to him, and his wife, by King Osbrith, and begged that a speedy succour, and a sufficient aid might be given to him, so that he might obtain a full and ample revenge.

Such tidings as these, were most welcome to Codrinus, the king of the Danes, and the Danish people;* because they afforded a plausible pretext for making war upon the English nation. Codrinus, the king of the Danes, for the sake of Bruern Brocard, (who had been fostered by persons connected by blood with the monarch,†) mustered, in all haste, an immense army, and appointed as its leaders

---

* See Mr. Laing's remarks upon the "*bondi*," and "*Things*," of the Northmen. *Chronicles of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. pp. 99—107; 113—122.

Herr Lappenberg conjectures that under the name of Codrinus, we may find "that Guthrum, who appears shortly after as the conqueror of East Anglia." *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 32. (THORPE's translation.) In addition to the authorities quoted in the same page, note 1, for the Danes being invited to England, we may add that of Buchanan. *Rer. Scot. Hist.*, lib. vi., § 8, p. 136. (Aberdeen ed., 1762).

† "Qui de suo sanguine educatus fuerat." BROMTON. See *Konung Harald Harfagers Saga*, c. 41, 42. SNORRO, vol. i. pp. 119, 120.

and generals, two brothers, the fearless Vikings, Inguar and Hubba. These, with a large fleet, supplied with all the munitions of war, and a countless host of soldiers were despatched to England.

The Danish fleet, directing its course towards the northern part of the country, landed at Holderness,* then passing onwards, destroyed by fire and the sword, all the villages with their inhabitants, that lay in their line of march. At length they reached the city of York. There they challenged King Osbrith to come out and meet them in battle. The challenge was accepted, Osbrith and his soldiers marched from the city, were encountered by the Danes, and all slaughtered on the spot.† The city itself was then taken by the Danes, who retained possession of it.

There was at the same time, another king in Northumbria, named Ella, who had been raised to the throne, by the relations and friends of Bruern Brocard; because they would neither hold lands from, nor acknowledge as their sovereign, Osbrith, by reason of his infamous conduct to their kinsman.‡ This king had been hunting in a forest, and when the sport had terminated, he sat himself down on the grass, saying; "We have had right good "luck to day, for we have taken four deer, and six fawns."

---

* See CAMDEN's *Britannia*, vol. iii. pp. 298, 318.

† During the reign of Alfred, it is stated that both Hubba, and Bruern Brocard were slain by him in the neighbourhood of Chippenham. See BROMTON *Chronicon.*, p. 809.

‡ "Nam Nordanhymbri eo tempore, ut diximus legitimum regem suum, Osbrichtum nomine, regno expulerant, et tyrannum quendam Ælla nomine, non de regali prosapia progenitum, super regni apicem constituerant." ASSER, *Ann.* p. 159. See *Sax. Chron.*, ad an. 867. ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 2, p. 843.

As he uttered the words, a person ran up to him, exclaiming, "Alas! though your majesty had taken a hundred "fold what you state, still have you had ill-luck, whilst "your time has been so occupied, for the Danes have "taken the city of York, have slain your colleague, King "Osbrith,* and are now busily engaged in the effort to "hold it for themselves, and to deprive you of this entire "kingdom."

Ella, upon hearing this, summoned to his aid all his dependents, mustered an army, and advanced with all speed to the city of York, with the intention of besieging it. The Danes however quitted York, and at a short distance from the city encountered Ella, and put him to death, with the great body of the forces he had under his command. The place where this battle took place, is still called "Ellescraft."† The survivors made peace with the

---

* "Rege Osbrith parcenario vestro." BROMTON. "Sed advenientibus Paganis, consilio divino et optimatum amminiculo, pro communi utilitate discordia illa aliquantulum sedata, Osbrichtus et Ælla, adunatis viribus, congregato exercitu, Eboracum oppidum adeunt." ASSER, *Ann.* p. 159.

† BROMTON *Chron.* pp. 802, 803. A different account of the engagements between the Northumbrian kings, Osbrith and Ella, with the Danes, is given by Asser. He states, "upon the approach of the Northumbrians to York, the Danes immediately fled, and sought to shelter themselves behind the walls of the city. The Christians observing the panic flight of the enemy, determined not only upon pursuing them, but breaking through the walls of the city—a feat, which they were able to accomplish, as the city had not, at that time, any thick and solid ramparts to defend it. As soon as a breach had been effected, and a great number of the Christian soldiers were inside the town with the Pagans, the latter becoming infuriated with despair, turned upon them, slaughtered many, put the rest to flight, and inflicted so complete a defeat upon their assailants both inside the town, and outside its walls, that the most considerable portion of the Northumbrian forces

Danes.* Thus was Northumbria obtained by right of war, and for a long time, smarting with the memory of the liberty it had once possessed, groaned beneath the dominion of barbarian masters.†

The same year, 867, (in which these events occurred,) died Alstan, who had been bishop of Sherborne for the space of fifty years; and his body was interred in the town of Sherborne.‡

---

were either taken or killed, and amongst the latter were the two Northumbrian kings, and most of the nobles of the land." Asser, *Ann.*, p. 159. The same account, but not so particularly stated, is given in the *Saxon Chronicle*, A.D. 867. Wm. of Malmsbury describes the Northumbrians, as being driven into the city of York by the Danes—that the city was then set on fire by the Pagans, that the Northumbrians were there burned, and the country they had endeavoured to protect, was covered with their ashes—("ipsi quoque conflagrati patriam ossibus texere suis"). W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 120.

* "And sie laf with thone here frith namon." *Sax. Chron.* Roger de Wendover adds, that an Englishman named Egbert, held the crown of Northumbria for six years as a dependant on the Danes, "sub Danorum potestate," vol. i. p. 299. It is added, by Simeon of Durham, that whilst the Danes were in East Anglia, the Northumbrians expelled King Egbert, and Archbishop Wulfer, and elected as their king, a person named Ricsig. *Hist. Dunelm. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 6, p. 14.

† W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 120. This invasion led to the permanent colonisation of Northumbria by the Danes. According to the words of the ever-accurate Sir Francis Palgrave, they "tilled and sowed the land which they had won." *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 49.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*, 867. Wm. of Malmsbury gives a most unfavourable character of this bishop, see pp. 8, 9, in the present volume. In his account of "the prelates of England," he repeats many of the phrases, which are to be found in his history. We

There was a terrible famine in the year 868.* The same year, the ever venerated King Alfred, paying due

---

copy some of these, which will shew, that Alstan was not obnoxious to the charge which has been so often made, and but too frequently proved against modern titular bishops; for he was neither "sordid," nor "avaricious," for selfish purposes, nor did he accumulate wealth for the aggrandisement of his family.

"Et erat ille (ut ex scriptis audivimus) sicut cupiditate præfervidus ita liberalitate præcipiens.

"Reliquit *ecclesiam suam prædivitem*, prædiis undecunque acquisitis, quanta si audias hominis cupiditatem, fœlicitatem mireris." *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 247. What Alstan might have been, had he a wife and children, we shall not venture to affirm. Asser praises Alstan. See *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 6, and *Ann.*, p. 159.

In this year (867), the Greek schismatics preferred many false accusations, and with these made some statements, which they preferred as if they were crimes, against "the Holy Church of Rome." Amongst its statements, we find them thus specified in the *Annales Bertiniani*, ad an. 867. (*Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. p. 97.)——"Calumniari sanctam Romanam ecclesiam, immo *omnem Ecclesiam quæ Latinâ utitur lingua; quia* jejunamus in Sabbatis; quod Spiritum Sanctum ex Patre Filioque procedere dicimus; *quia Presbyteros sortiri conjuges prohibemus.*" The false charges were these. "Dicentes ipsi Græci quod Chrisma ex aqua fluminis Latini conficiamur: reprehendentes nos Latinos, quod octo hebdomadibus ante Pascha a carnium, et septem hebdomadibus a casei, et ovorum esu more suo non cessamus; dicentes etiam, &c. &c. One of the statements—that is, the celibacy of the clergy, is thus referred by Pope Nicholas:—"Dicunt præterea nos abominari nuptias, quia presbyteros sortiri conjuges prohibemus." Of the charges as to faith, and the statements as to discipline, the pious Pope thus characterises each —— "Aut falsa sunt, quæ nobis impingere, moliuntur; aut certe jam *a prisco tempore, sine cujusquam contradictione in Ecclesia Romana, immo in tota occidentali parte hactenus custodita.*" BARONIUS, *Annal.* 867, § 50, 53, vol. xv. pp. 101, 102.

* This famine was felt in all parts of Europe. In some places the living fed upon the bodies of the dead. "Tanta inedia omnium pene fuit provinciarum, et exiguitas panis ut præ inopia victus homines infinitæ multitudinis fuerint a comparibus interempti, atque bestiarum more dentibus laniati." *Chronic. Engolismens*, A.D. 868. See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. pp. 173, 208, 235, 238, 248, 254, 266, 275, 361.

regard to the position that he then held as heir apparent to the throne*, sought for in marriage and was wedded to a noble Mercian lady,† of the race of Adhelred, of Gainsborough, a daughter of an ealdorman, who bore the surname of "Mucill,"‡ a surname that is synonymous with great.§

In the course of this year the army of the Pagans marched from Northumbria to Mercia, which kingdom they penetrated as far as Nottingham, where they established their winter quarters. In the British tongue Nottingham is designated "*Tigguo cobauc,*" that which is interpreted—"the home of hollowed rocks."‖

Upon the approach of the Danes, Burhred, king of the Mercians, and all the great men of the kingdom sent full speed messengers to Ethered, king of the West Saxons, and his brother Alfred, humbly entreating both, that they would give their best aid, in fighting with them against the Pagan forces. The brothers were not more slow in promising such assistance than in bestowing it. An immense army was mustered by them, with which they advanced to the Mercian frontier, and then pushed on, with

---

* "Rex secundarii." See DUCANGE, in verb. "*secundarius.*"

† "Uxorem de Mercia * * * *subarravit* et duxit." ASSER, *Ann.*, p. 159. "*Expitivit* et duxit." *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 6.

‡ ASSER, *Ann.*, p. 159. "Filiam Ethelredi Gainorum cognomento Magni." *Chron. Mailros*, p. 143.

§ R. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 300. Asser, in his life of Alfred, states that he had himself frequently seen the mother of Alfred's queen—that her name was Eadburga, that she was connected with the royal family of Mercia, and from the time of her husband's decease, had ever lived the true life of a widow. See *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 6.

‖ "Latine autem *speluncarum domus.*" ASSER.

an eager desire for battle, to the town of Nottingham.* They attacked the Danes at the walls of the town, but no great damage was done on either side.† The Danes were defended by ramparts, and would not encounter the Christians in the field, whilst the Christians had not the means wherewith they could effect a breach in the walls. A truce was agreed to between the Mercians and Pagans, and the two brothers Ethered and Alfred retired with their soldiers to their own country.‡

In the year 869 there was a frightful famine, a terrible and mortal plague amongst human beings, and a destructive pestilence amongst cattle.§

This year the army of the Danes, having obtained a supply of horses, retired to the city of York, and remained there for the space of an entire year.‖ During all

---

* Asser. *Vit. Ælf.* p. 6.

† "And thone here waer melton on tham geweorce, and hie hine inne besetton. And thaer nan heflic gefeoht ne wearth." *Sax. Chron.*

‡ Asser. *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 6. *Ann.* p. 159. The Chronicle of Melrose asserts that the leaders of the Danes at Nottingham were Inguar and Hubba, ad an. 868, p. 143.

§ Asser. *Ann.* p. 159. These calamitous occurrences are worthy of notice, because in them we may trace some of the causes for the subsequent successes of the Danes.

In the course of this year (869), a battle took place on the banks of the Loire between the Christians and the Northmen, in which sixty of the latter were slain, and amongst the prisoners taken was an "apostate monk, who had abandoned Christianity, joined the ranks of the Northmen, and had given frequent proofs of his hatred of the Christians. This apostate monk was beheaded." *Annal. Bert. Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii., p. 107.

‖ Asser. *Ann.*, p. 159. This retreat to Nottingham, was, it is said, by Henry of Huntingdon, in consequence of the truce that

that period of time they raged unrestrained through the land, and seemed to be inspired with a maniac fury in their slaughter of men, and their massacre of women, Numerous indeed were their victims of both sexes;* for whilst even old men and young boys were murdered, a worse fate was but too often reserved for the innocent and maiden inhabitants of convents.†

The fame of the cruel deeds of the Danes had spread over the entire of the land, when Ebba, the holy abbess of the monastery of Coldingham, fearing that she herself, as well as those over whom she had the pastoral care, might be seized upon by these barbarians, and rendered unworthy to appear as the unblemished spouses of Christ, convoked her sisters to a chapter, and thus addressed them :—

"There have lately arrived on our shores Pagan men, "who seem to be the most wicked of their kind, who ap- "pear to be unconscious of every feeling of humanity; "and who, as they have passed through every place have "had no pity on the weakness of woman, nor the help- "lessness of childhood; who have despoiled churches, "put to death ecclesiastics, dishonoured nuns; and who "have wasted, consumed, and destroyed every thing they "have encountered. I have, however, by the divine aid, "conceived a plan, which should it be adopted by you,

---

had been made with the Mercians. He ascribes the success of this artful proceeding to Inguar. See lib. v. p. 349.

* ROGER DE HOVEDEN, *Ann.* p. 416. "Crudeliter uno anno permansit." H. HUNT., p 349. Their policy it appears was to depopulate the land, which they intended afterwards to colonize.

† "Pueros et senes quosque sibi obvios jugulabant, matronasque sanctimoniales seu virginales ludibrio tradendas mandabant." ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 301.

"will save us all scathless, from the worst rage of these "barbarians, because it will enable us to preserve our- "selves as pure and fitting virgin victims to our Lord."

The entire congregation of nuns, upon hearing these words, bound themselves by a solemn promise that they would, in all things, obey the precept, and imitate the example of Ebba. Then indeed did this wonderfully courageous abbess openly before all the sisters, exhibit an example, advantageous not only to them, but worthy of imitation for ever by all succeeding virgins; for taking a razor she cut off her nose, and all the upper lip that covered the teeth, and at once became a spectacle of absolute horror to all who looked upon her!

This memorable deed was regarded with admiration by all the community, and every individual member of the sisterhood inflicted similar wounds upon herself, and thus followed precisely the example that had been given them by the mother abbess.

This mighty deed had been done, and the Pagans burst into the convent at an early hour in the morning, resolved upon giving loose to their passions, and then destroying by fire the spoliated monastic buildings. As soon however as the Pagans beheld the abbess, and all the sisters, so frightfully mutilated and deformed, bedewed with their own blood, from their head to their feet, they started away from them in horror; they seemed to feel, as if the brief moments, in which they had looked upon such objects, were long and wearisome, and therefore hurried with all speed out of the convent. Their leaders (Inguar and Hubba) withdrew also from the place, but they directed their accursed followers to set fire to and burn down the monastery, all the buildings belonging to it, as well as its

143940

inhabitants. This wicked command was punctually executed by the servants in iniquity, and thus did the holy abbess, and all her sanctified virgin sisters, attain to the glory of martyrdom.*

Having perpetrated this wicked deed, these most iniquitous infidels sailed up along the sea-coast, destroying with fire and sword whatever came in their way. In this their diabolical persecution they destroyed all the monasteries that were within view of the sea; amongst these was Lindisfarne, then a cathedral seat, and which had been adorned by the sacred remains of the blessed bishop Cuthbert; the monastery of Tynemouth; of Jarrow, and of Were, in which the priest Bede had been educated; of Whitby, which the blessed abbess Hilda had founded, and where she had gathered around her a multitude of virgins.

Thus did these accursed leaders pass through the district of York, burning churches, towns, and villas, murdering persons of both sexes, and of every age, and loading themselves with spoils and pillage of every description.†

Upon the close of the winter, the Pagan army, which had been in York, passed by boats into Lindsey, and in their progress to Humberstan laid waste the entire

---

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i. pp. 301, 302. This event took place on the 2nd of April, see Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. iv. p. 421. Baronius, vol. xv. pp. 215, 216, § 39, 40, an. 870. Alford, *Ann. Eccl. Ang.* vol. iii. pp. 108, 109, § 4, 10. These are Catholic authors, and refer to the conduct of Ebba, in terms of the highest praise. On the other hand, the editor of Sir H. Spelman's "Life of Ælfred" declares it to be "a strange example of an heroic if not too great a) love of chastity," note 1, p. 34.

† Rog. de Wend., vol. i. pp. 301, 302, 303.

country.* It was at this time, that was destroyed the celebrated and ancient monastery of Bardeney, when all its monks were mercilessly put to death in the church itself. During the entire of the summer months the Danes were engaged in burning, and plundering the land, and slaughtering its inhabitants; and thus did they occupy their days, in spoil, in conflagration, and in murder, until the approach of Michaelmas, when they marched into Kesteven.

In the month of September, and in the year of our Lord 870, the valiant ealdorman Algar mustered under his command the young men of Hoyland. He had as his assistants in war, his two seneschals, Wibert, and Leofric—persons whose names are preserved in the country by being attached to the two villas in which they dwelt; for the old men and the peasantry still designate one of them as "Wiberton," (Wibert's Vill) and the other as Lefrikton (Leofric's Vill). With these were united the military array of Croyland, consisting of about two hundred stout veterans, the most of whom were of the class of fugitives. These were under the command of brother Toli, a monk of Croyland monastery—a man, who before his conversion to the life of a religious, had been famous all over Mercia for his military achievements; but who afterwards, for the love of heaven, abandoned the world, and devoted himself to a spiritual combat, within the walls of Croyland. There was joined to his troop about three hundred stout men, fitted for war, from Depping, Langtoft and Baston. With these there was also to be reckoned Morcard, the master of

* Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 20. (Gale), p. 865. (*Script. post Bedam*).

Brunne, and all his household, who were equally numerous and courageous. To all of whom should be added, the vicegerent of Lincoln, Osgot, a veteran and valiant warrior, with the Lincoln battalion, five hundred strong. All these brave men were gathered together in Kesteven on the feast of St. Maurice the Martyr, 22nd September, and there did they fight a battle with the Pagans, when Heaven was pleased to grant them the victory. Three of the kings, and an immense multitude of common soldiers were slain by the Christians who pursued the barbarians, even to the very entrance of their tents. A valiant resistance was there made by the foe; night put an end to the conflict, and the invincible ealdorman recalled his troops.

That same night there arrived in the camp of the Pagans all the other kings who had spread themselves through the provinces, spoiling and robbing wheresoever they went. These kings were Gogroum, Baseg, Oskitel, Halfden, and Hamond, and the jarls who accompanied them were Frena, Unguar and Hubba, with the two Sidrocs, the elder and the younger. All had their warriors with them, escorting a vast spoil, and, as their prisoners, an immense multitude of women and children.*

As soon as the arrival of these new troops was known to the Christians, the most of them were stricken with terror, and departed from the encampment during the course of the night, so that of the eight hundred men specially commanded by the ealdorman and his captains in the evening, there scarcely remained two hundred the following morning. These at the dawn having attended to the divine office, and

---

* See DEPPING, *Histoire des Expeditions maritimes des Normauds*, vol. i. p. 64.

partaken of the holy communion as their viaticum,* all most willing and ready to die for the faith of Christ, and in defence of their country, marched into the field against the barbarians.

The valiant ealdorman, perceiving that his army was insufficiently protected by its position, determined to confide the command of the right wing to brother Toli, and his five hundred men, as they were of the bravest of his soldiers, whilst they were flanked, by the illustrious Morcard of Brunne, and all the warriors attached to his standard. The ealdorman placed on the left wing the vice-regent Osgot, and his five hundred soldiers, who were flanked by the stout Hardingum of Rehale, and the men of Stanford —all young, and animated with a martial spirit. The ealdorman and his seneschals placed themselves in the centre, and were prepared to aid either wing, as the necessity and accidents of the day might require.

On the other side were the Danes, more furious, if possible, than ever for the loss they had sustained, having, at the very break of day, consigned to the earth their three kings in a place which had previously been known as "Laundon;" but since it has been made the burial place of the three Danish kings, has been designated "Trekyngham." These Danes had as their commanders, four kings, and eight jarls; whilst two kings and four jarls guarded their encampment, and their captives.

The Christians were compelled, by the paucity of their numbers to concentrate their ranks into the form of a wedge, and thus did they all, under the excellent instruction of their leaders, maintain immoveably and undauntedly

* "Auditis divinis officiis, et sumto sacro viatico."—Ingulphus.

their position for an entire day, defending themselves from the heavy showers of the foemen's arrows, by their stout shields, which protected them as if they stood beneath a pent-house, and repelling the furious assaults of the foemen's horse by the close sharp points of their spears. So remained the Christians invincible until the evening—the arrows of the enemy discharged against them had produced as little effect, as if they had been shot into the vacant air—their horses too were broken down, by extreme fatigue. Then it was, that the barbarians feigned that they felt they had been defeated, and pretended a retreat from the field of battle.

The Christians, perceiving this movement of the enemy, despite of their captains, and in defiance of their earnest remonstrances, broke from the ranks, and without either order or generals to conduct them, scattered themselves all over the plain in pursuit of the enemy. The barbarians instantly wheeled round, and pounced upon them as lions would throw themselves upon so many sheep. On seeing this, the most valiant earldorman Algar, with the renowned leaders already mentioned, along with brother Toli, rallied together on a little mound — a small space of ground which was somewhat higher then any other part of the field—and there arranging themselves in a circle, they for a very long space of time withstood the repeated attacks of the enemy. At last, when the illustrious earldorman, the ever-memorable Algar, and his six most valiant captains, saw that the bravest of their soldiers had fallen, they rushed in a body into the thickest heap of their fallen associates' corpses, and there, each putting forth his last energies, and exacting in the deaths of their assailants, a fitting vengeance for their own blood, they

finally fell, covered with innumerable wounds, upon the bodies of their fellow soldiers and brother Christians.

A few young men, from Sutton and Gedency, cast away their arms, and with difficulty saved themselves in the adjoining forest. From thence they emerged on the following night, to carry to Croyland monastery intelligence of the defeat of the Christians, of the death of brother Toli, and of the destruction of all his followers. The abbot, Theodore, and his monks, were engaged in the prayers appointed for the morning vigil, when the clamorous cries and the dismal howling of the fugitives announced their arrival at the doors of the church.

All were cast into a state of confusion by this intelligence. The abbot determined upon retaining with himself in the monastery, the aged monks, and a few of the young boys, hoping that perchance, the helplessness of both might excite the commiseration of the barbarians; but in so doing, forgetting that which has been said by the poet:

> "Nor faith, nor pity moves the heart of him
> "Whose home's a camp, and who lives by war."*

All the monks who were in the vigour of life, as well as the younger men attached to the monastery, took with them the sacred relics of the monastery; amongst these were the most blessed body† of St. Guthlac, the Saint's

---

* "Nulla fides pietasque viris, qui castra sequuntur."

† "Sacratissima gleba corporis Sancti Guthlaci." INGULPHUS. "Ad virtutiferam sancti glebam, nemine retinente perveniunt." GREGOR. TURON. *Vit. Pat.* c. 7.

> "Semper hic et eris, non hospes, at incola, cujus
> "Nos penes est dulcedo recens, sacra gleba, sepulcri
> "Gratia, defuncti cineres veneramur abunde."

N. RIEVALLENS. See DUCANGE *Glossarium in verb.* "*Gleba.*"

Discipline and Psalter, with some of the principal jewels and documents, such as the charter of its foundation by King Ethelbald, the subsequent confirmations of the charter by different kings, and some of the donations of King Wiglaf. The monks who carried these with them, were desired by the abbot, to betake themselves to the adjoining marshes, and there await the event of the war. The monks, to the great grief of their hearts, obeyed these commands. They stowed a small boat with the above mentioned relics, and with the memorials of former kings. The slab of the high altar, which was covered with plates of gold, and had been presented to the monastery by King Wiglaf, ten goblets, with hand-basins, foot-baths, dishes, tankards, and other brazen vessels, were cast into the cloister well, where all were concealed, with the exception of the altar-slab, an end of which, on account of its extreme length, appearing above the surface of the water. It thus became necessary again to remove this altar-slab; but whilst extracting it from the well, the monks perceived the fires bursting out from the village of Kesteven, gradually approaching, and thereby denoting the advance of the pagans. Fearful of the instant arrival of the Danes, they were sent away by the abbots and the senior members of the monastery. The fugitives hurried off with their little vessel, and arrived at the wood of Ancarrig, which is close to the south of the island. There they remained, to the number of thirty, (ten of them being priests, and the others in minor orders), for four days with brother Toret, who passed his life in that spot as an anchorite.

Meanwhile the abbot, with two of the old monks, carried the altar-slab outside of the church, to the north of which they concealed it in the earth, but where or in what

place no one has ever since been able to discover.* The abbot and all the remaining monks then arrayed themselves in their vestments, and assembling together in the choir, they said the regular prayers of the Divine office, and afterwards recited the entire Psalter of David. The lord abbot next celebrated high mass, with brother Elget serving as deacon, and brother Savin as sub-deacon, whilst the acolytes were the brothers Egelred and Wlric. The mass had been finished, and the abbot, with his attendant priests, partaken of communion, when the pagans burst into the church, and at once, and by the hand of the cruel King Osketul, the venerable abbot was slain on the holy altar—a true martyr! a victim to Christ was he thus immolated! whilst all the ministering priests were beheaded by the barbarians. The young and the old men, in attempting to fly from the choir, were laid hold of, and again and again subjected to the most bitter tortures, for the purpose of compelling them to discover where the church treasures were concealed. Sir Asker, the prior, was killed in the vestry, Sir Lethvyn, the sub-prior, was cut down in the refectory. He had been followed thither by brother Tugar, who was then but a child ten years of age, and remarkable for the beauty of his face and form. When the boy saw his beloved old man thus slain, he eagerly prayed that he might die along with him, and be put to death in the same manner. But the jarl Sidroc, the younger, moved with pity for the boy, stripped him of his monk's cowl, which he replaced with a Danish hood,† and then desired

* "Ubi absconderit, usque in præsens non potuit deprendi." INGULPHUS. We trust the reader may pardon us for adhering so closely to our author, in giving these and other trifling incidents.

† "Dato Danico *collobio*." INGULPHUS. "Roba longa ad instar

him to follow his footsteps whithersoever he went. Thus was this boy, of all the old and the young that had remained in the monastery, the only one that had been spared—coming in and going out, amongst the Danes, the entire time that he stayed, as if he were one of themselves, and all this through the favour and protection of the before mentioned jarl.

All the monks having been put to death by the torturers, and yet not a particle of the church treasure discovered to them, the Danes began with mattocks and plough-shares to smash the tombs of the saints, which were built of large lofty marble stones, and placed on the right and the left of the sepulchre of the holy father Guthlac. On the right were the tombs of Saint Cissa, priest and anchorite, of Saint Bettelm, a holy man, and formerly an attendant on Saint Guthlac; and of the Lord Siward, abbot, of pious memory. On the left were the tombs of Saint Egbert, the confessor of Saint Guthlac; of Saint Tatwini, the former conductor and pilot of Saint Guthlac to Croyland; of the holy virgin Alfleda; of Celfreda, formerly queen; and Wymund, the son of king Wiglaf. These were all broken to pieces by the barbarians, who when they did not discover the riches they had hoped to find, were filled with rage, and gathering together all the bodies of the saints, they placed them in a single heap, set fire to them, and with them, on the third day of their arrival, accomplished the fell purpose, which

---

sacerdotis, cum capicio penulato circa humeros ejus, et desuper *collobio.*" FORTESCUE. *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ* c. 51. "A long robe priest like, with a furred cape about his shoulders, and thereupon a hood." SELDEN'S translation, p. 123. (London. ed. 1660.)

they desired to effect, by burning (it was on the 25th day of September)* the church, and all the edifices belonging to the monastery!

At last, they set out on the fourth day (from Croyland), to Peterborough, where the country people were collected in defence of the monastery,† and its gates closed against them, they immediately assailed its walls, with discharges of arrows, and the besieging machines of war. In their second assault, the Pagans were able to make good their entrance, and as they were breaking into the monastery, Lubba, the brother of the jarl Hubba, was wounded severely by the blow of a stone, which prostrated him in the porch, and from whence he was removed by his attendants to his brother's tent, in such a state, that his life was despaired of. In consequence of this, Hubba, foaming with inordinate rage, determined to glut his vengeance, especially on the persons of the monks, actually slew with his own hand, all that he could find wearing the garb peculiar to persons who have devoted themselves to a holy and a religious life. Not a single individual belonging to the monastery was spared. The venerable father, abbot Hedda, then a very old man, all the monks, and every one of their countrymen were massacred. At that time, brother Tugar was warned by his master, the jarl Sidroc, to take care, and keep out of the way of Hubba. All the altars were dug up, all the tombs shattered to

---

* "Septimo calendarum *Septembris*." INGULPHUS. "Octobris." *Chron. Petriburgense*, p. 19.

† "Ubi *primam* collectam infra monasterium." INGULPHUS. "Ubi *patriam* collectam." *Chron. Petriburg.* p. 19.

atoms, a great library of holy books burned;* an immense collection of monastic documents torn up; the precious deposits of the holy virgins Kyneburga, Kyneswitha, and Tibba trodden under foot: the church itself, with the adjoining buildings burned — affording to the flames sufficient fuel, during the entire of the following fifteen days.

On the fourth day, the Pagans, having collected countless spoils from the entire country, marched in a body (from Peterborough) towards Huntingdon. The two jarls, the elder and the younger Sidroc, always marched the hindmost of all the troops, as they had to protect the rear of the army in the passage of rivers. They had seen the whole of the Danish forces pass the river Nen in safety; and they themselves were in the act of passing it, when two of their carts, on which were piled vast treasures, and a great variety of utensils, sunk into a deep hole, which is on the left hand side of the stone bridge, and then, before they could possibly be drawn out, the animals drawing them were drowned. At the moment that all the retinue of the younger Sidroc was engaged in dragging the two carts from the river, and whilst they were busily occupied in removing the treasures that had been placed on them to other vehicles, brother Tugar made his escape from them, by flying into an adjoining wood,† and then walking during the entire night, he arrived at the dawn of morning in Croyland.

Tugar found in Croyland the monks, who had fled to

---

* "Sanctorum librorum ingens bibliotheca combusta." INGULPHUS.

† "Elapsus in proximam sylvam." INGULPHUS. "In proxima parietina." *Chron. Petriburg.*, p. 20.

Ancarrig, and returned from thence the preceding day, busily engaged in the endeavour to extinguish the fires; which were still burning in many parts of the monastery. As soon as they beheld him, and found that he was still safe and well, they were, in no slight degree, consoled; but when they heard from him in what manner, and what places their abbot, and their brother monks, and their seniors had been slaughtered, and how all the sepulchres of the saints, the documents, the holy books,* as well as the bodies of the saints, had been torn, and burned, they were all filled with an inexpressible grief; bitter were their tears, and loud and long was their lamentation.

Wearied at length with weeping, they returned to the work, in which they had been previously occupied—that of extinguishing the fires. Whilst they were employed in removing and carrying away the remains of the roof of the church, which had fallen inside the building, they found on the high altar, the decapitated body of the venerable father, the abbot Theodore. The body was lying denuded of its vestments, half-burned, shattered by the accidental falling of timbers upon it, and flattened against the earth. Thus was it discovered on the eighth day after his decease, amidst some quenched torches, and removed a short distance from the spot, on which he had been put to death. As to the priests and monks, who had fallen at the same time with the abbot, their bodies were found in the same condition with his—that is, crushed to the earth with the heap of ruins that had fallen. All were so recovered, with the exception of the acolyte Wlric. These discoveries

* "Et fundamenta, sacraque volumina." *Chron. Petriburg.* "Et monumenta omnia, sacraque volumina sua." INGULPHUS.

were, however, only made at various periods of time; for the bodies of some of the monks were not found until six months after the time they had suffered martyrdom, and then in places, different from those, in which they had been put to death. For instance, there were father Paul, and father Herbert, who were both very old men, and actually decrepid from their great age, and whose hands had been cut off; and who then were tortured to death in the choir, where a long and diligent search had been made for them, but that were at last found in the chapter-house. Then there were father Grimketul, and father Agamund, who were both upwards of a hundred years of age, and whose bodies had been transpierced with swords in the cloister, were yet found lying in the reception-room. And so it was, with all the rest, whether old or young, all were long looked for, and all at last discovered, with the single exception, Wlric; and as each was discovered, brother Tugar told how and in what manner the deceased had been put to death. Discoveries and a narration that were accompanied with heartfelt mourning, and with copious tears.

Father Bricstan, who had been the former chanter of the monastery, and who was the most skilful composer, and the most illustrious poet amongst the survivors of this disaster, wrote upon the ruins of Croyland, some elegiac lines, which are to be found in many places, and commence thus:—

"Oh! noblest home of piety and grace,
"Thou regal mansion, which religion rais'd
"For God's pure worship; how hast thou fallen."*

The monastery having, by long, and severe labour, been

* "Quomodo sola sedes dudum regina domorum,
"Nobilis Ecclesia, et nuper amica Dei, etc." INGULPHUS.

completely disencumbered of the ruins, with which it had been filled, and the ashes, rubbish, and filth being, as far as it was possible, for the time removed, and the place itself purified, the monks then talked of electing a pastor over them. An election accordingly took place, and the venerable father Godric was, contrary to his own desire, and despite of his opposition to the contrary, unanimously elected, and constituted as the abbot.

As abbot, Godric was visited by the venerable old man, Toret, prior of Ancarrig, and by master Tisa the sub-prior. Both of these most sanctified and devout anchorites prayed the abbot that he would take with him some of his monks, and go to Peterborough, where the bodies of his brother abbot, and of their fellow monks lay still unburied, a prey to beasts, and to the birds of the air, in order that they might perform a work of charity, by bestowing upon them Christian burial.

Such a request was at once complied with by the venerable abbot Godric, who, with several of the monks (and among the rest was brother Tugar) went to Peterborough, where he was met by all the monks of Ancarrig. There with a great deal of labour all the bodies of the monks of the monastery were brought together, and there to the number of eighty-four were they all deposited in one wide grave, which had been dug for the purpose in the centre cemetery of the monastery, and opposite to what had once been the eastern front of the church. This interment took place on the feast of St. Cecilia (22nd of November.) Godric placed over the body of the abbot, which rested in the midst of his brethren, a pyramidical stone, which was three feet high, three feet long, and one foot broad, and on which were cut the images of the deceased

abbot and his monks, and that, as a memorial of the utterly ruined monastery, he directed should henceforth be designated "Medhamstead." Every year, as long as the same abbot Godric lived, he visited this place, erected a tent over the sepulchral stone, and there for two days, with his accustomed devotion, celebrated masses for the repose of the souls of those who were interred beneath.*

The king's high road lay through the cemetery, and on the right-hand side of it, for those who crossed the stone-bridge on the way to Hoyland, was the before mentioned pyramidical monument, and on the left, a stone cross, with the graven image of our Saviour. This was also erected by the Abbot Godric, and both were intended to excite in the minds of all travellers a recollection of the holy monastery, and an inducement to offer up prayers for the souls of the faithful, whose bodies were buried in that cemetery ;† and also that they might be a warning to thieves, and malefactors that they should, had they still any reverence for Christ, abstain from crime within the precincts of the ruined monastery.‡

At that time father Toret, the prior of Ancarrig, having been informed by brother Tugar, in what part of the church the relics of the holy virgin Kyneburga and others had been cast down, and trodden upon by the Pagans, he

---

* "Pro animabus ibidem sepultorum Missas per biduum devotione continua celebravit." INGULPHUS. The text will bear the interpretation, that repeated masses were said during these two days, for the repose of the souls of the martyred monks.

† "Pro animabus fidelium in ipso cœmeterio quiescentium preces Domino solverent." INGULPHUS.

‡ INGULPHUS *Hist.*, pp. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, (GALE,) pp. 865, 866, 867, 868, (*Script. post Bedam.*) Compare with these the *Chron. Petriburg*, pp. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. (GILES).

reverently as he could collected them together, took them away with him, and on his return with his brother-monks to Ancarrig, deposited them, with all due reverence, in his oratory.*

Meanwhile the Pagans pursued their career of spoliation through the provinces, and at last reached the celebrated monastery for nuns in the isle of Ely, where all the inhabitants as well as men were cruelly put to death by them, and where were stored immense heaps of treasures with rich ornaments of every description: these having been brought thither from all parts of the country, as to a place of security.† All were seized upon by the barbarians, who then gave up the monastery to the flames.‡

---

* *Chron. Petriburg*, p. 22.

† In former times men confided the care of their richest treasures, of their gold, their jewels, and their charters or their title deeds, to the care of the monks, confident they would find them, in the same condition in which they had been deposited in the monasteries. The confidence thus reposed in them brought down at one time upon the monks the enmity, and exposed them to the spoliation, of infidels, and at another period to the interested slander, and the unsparing robbery of heretics—of those utterly unworthy of the name of Christians. An instance of the one is given by Ingulphus, and the other we take from Prudentius :—

"Nam quoscumque *salvandi gratia* repositos vel in ecclesiis vel in earum gazophylaciis thesauros, etiam sacerdotibus et ceterorum ordinum clericis juramento devinctis, reperire potuit, auferre non distulit." *Annal. Bertin.*, 841. PERTZ, *Monument. German. Histor.* vol. i. p. 438. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 60.

For the present, it is not necessary to refer more distinctly to the modern imitators of the Emperor Lothair.

‡ INGULPHUS, *Hist.*, p. 24 (Gale), p. 868, (*Script. post Bedam.*) "Ex ipsis autem clericis, quid deprædati fuerant, post aliquot annos viii reversi sunt. Dein ipsis alii succedendo porticus ecclesiæ resarcientes, Archipresbyterum et Præpositum inter se constituerunt. Et ita sub ipsorum naufragosa gubernatione fluctuans vacillabat ecclesia Eliensis c. annis." *Historia Eliensis*, p. 594. (Ang. Sac.) See *Hist. Eliensis* in GALE, lib. i. c. i. p. 464.

From this place the Danes passed to East Anglia.* It is stated, that two amongst them, the brothers Inguar and Hubba had come to England not merely for the purpose which has been before mentioned,† but rather with the intent of wreaking their vengeance upon Edmund the king of the East Angles, who had been accused (falsely accused) of having put their father to death, and therefore did they on this occasion march with their armed followers to East Anglia.‡

Since it was destined that in this persecution of the Christians, the glorious king and martyr, Edmund, should fall beneath the swords of the iniquitous Inguar and Hubba, we have thought it fitting to insert in this place, that which was the cause of his martyrdom, and why it was these ruthless chieftains should have condemned a pious king to suffer a most cruel death.§

---

* Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 24.

† That is, to aid Brocard in taking vengeance upon King Osbrith for the wrong done to him. See pp. 91—94, in this volume.

‡ Bromton, *Chron.* p. 804. "Abbot Floriacensis, who wrote in the tenth century, describes East Anglia as nearly environed with waters; immense marshes, an hundred miles in extent were on the north, the ocean on the east and south. On the west it was protected from the irruptions of the other members of the octarchy, by a mound of earth like a lofty wall. Its soil was fertile and pleasant; it was full of lakes two or three miles in space; its marshes were peopled with monks, MSS. Cott. Library. Tib. B. 2, p. 3." Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 526, note 34.

§ Rog. de Wendov. vol. i. p. 303. "The life and passion of St. Eadmund, as here related, appears to have been taken principally from that written by Abbo, abbot of Fleury, who flourished at the end of the tenth century, and which is printed by Surius,

There had been some years previous to this time, A.D. 870, in the kingdom of Denmark, a certain person of the blood royal, named Lodbroc (Lothbrocus), and he had two sons, Inguar and Hubba. One day, Lodbroc took with him his hawk, and ventured out alone in a little boat, in order that he might upon the islands, close to the shore, catch wild ducks, and other birds of that description. His boat, however, was caught by a sudden storm, and driven out into the wide ocean, where he was tossed about for some days and nights, and at length having endured much hardship, and been exposed to great danger, he was cast upon the English coast, and in that province of the East Angles, which is called by its inhabitants Norfolk. The place at which he landed is the village of Redham.* Being there discovered by the persons of the place, a single man with a hawk, he was presented by them, as something wonderful to Edmund, king of the East Angles.

---

tom. vii. p. 465." COXE. (ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 303, note 2. E. H. S.) "One of the fullest accounts of the fate of Edmund, is in the little book of Abbo. He addresses it to the famous Dunstan, from whom he had the particulars he narrates. He intimates that Dunstan used to repeat them with eyes moist with tears, and had learnt them from an old soldier of Edmund's, who simply and faithfully recounted them *upon his oath* to the illustrious Ethelstan." TURNER'S *History of the Anglo-Saxon Kings*, vol. i. p. 527, note 35. "Abbo received the account from Dunstan, who had it from Edmund's sword-bearer. A semi-Saxon version of the narrative as a homily, is printed in the *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*, from a Bodleian MS." THORPE. (LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo-Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 39, note 1.) In the *Annals* of ASSER, this narrative will be found strictly adhered to. As to the Danish accounts of Ragnar Lodbroc, (Regnerus Lotbrog,) see BERING, *Florus Danicus*, pp. 164, 165, 166, 167, 168.

* "A village on the Yare river in Norfolk; CAMDEN, i. p. 367; called by BROMTON, 'Rodham.'" COXE. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 304, note 3. (E. H. S.)

The king, who was pleased with the appearance and bearing of Lodbroc, received him with honour, assigned him a place in his palace; and as the language of the Danes bears a strong affinity to that of the East Angles, Lodbroc was able to make the king acquainted by what strange accident he had been cast upon the English coast. The dignity of the king's manners excited the admiration of Lodbroc. He was also gratified in beholding the discipline of the soldiers, the forms of the court, and the bearing of the courtiers in their attendance on the sovereign: matters, which the eloquence of the king made by their explanation fully intelligible to him. Lodbroc earnestly entreated of the king that he might remain a member of his household, in order that he might become thoroughly informed in all that related to the forms of a court.* The request was graciously acceded to by King Edmund, and Lodbroc immediately attached himself to the king's forester, a person named Bern, in order that he might practise the art of venery, in which he was thoroughly accomplished. So much, indeed, was he a master in this science, that it might be said, that he caught whatever beast or fowl, he desired to take, and thus was able frequently to supply the royal table with the most delicious dishes. The courtesy, thus exhibited by him, naturally won for him the affection of the sovereign; and the favour he had so gained provoked the grievous enmity of the king's forester, who saw himself so far surpassed in his own arts and occupation by the stranger.

One day, whilst the forester and Lodbroc were together,

---

* "Ut sibi liceret in ejus curia demorari, ut regiis posset plenius instrui disciplinis."

and engaged in their usual sport, the former, animated with his mortal enmity against the latter, made a sudden and wicked attack upon Lodbroc, basely put him to death, concealed the body in the thickest part of the forest, and then collecting by the sound of his horn his dogs around him, returned to his home. Now Lodbroc had reared a greyhound* in the palace of King Edmund, and as it frequently happens with such animals, the greyhound was greatly attached to him, and when all the other dogs followed the forester, it alone remained behind with the body of its master.

The next day, when the king was seated at table, and not seeing Lodbroc, as usual, ranged with his guards, he anxiously enquired of the attendants what had become of him. To this question the forester Bern replied, "that on "the preceding day, when he had left the forest, Lodbroc "had remained behind, and that since then he had not "seen him." Scarcely, however, had he uttered the words, than the greyhound which Lodbroc had reared, was seen entering the royal mansion, and indicating by its attitudes, its joy at seeing the king, and the desire to attract his attention.† As soon as the king perceived it, he addressed those who were present, saying: "Lo! this is Lodbroc's "dog, it comes to apprise us that its master is approach-"ing." The joy of the king was denoted in the caresses and care he bestowed on the dog, but the event turned out

* "Leporarium quendam." ROG. DE WEND. See as to laws relating to greyhounds, DUCANGE, in verb. "*Canis Leporarius.*" The most curious enactment respecting the crime of stealing dogs for the purpose of sport, will be found amongst the statutes of the Burgundians. See *Leges Burgundorum; Additamentum Primum.* tit. x. in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. iv. p. 280.

† "Et maxime regi adulante cauda applaudere satagebat."

far otherwise than he had anticipated; for the moment the animal had been fed, it quitted the palace and returned to keep its accustomed watch over the dead body of its master.

At the end of three days, the dog, under the pressure of hunger, a second time made its way to the palace and the table of the king, where it was again fed. The monarch, struck with admiration at this circumstance, desired the dog to be watched when it left the palace, and to be tracked whithersoever it might go. This was done, and the king's servants by following the dog, at length were led to the discovery of the lifeless body of its master.

The king upon hearing these unhappy tidings, was greatly afflicted by them, and ordered that the body of Lodbroc should be consigned to a fitting place of interment.

A diligent inquisition was then set on foot respecting the manner in which Lodbroc had come by his death, and the result was to induce the conviction, that the forester Bern had perpetrated the accursed deed. Edmund ordered the knights of his court, well skilled in the laws, should adjudge what ought to be done with the homicide. All unanimously agreed that the forester should be placed in the same little boat in which Lodbroc had arrived in England, that he should, without oars or anything else, be dropped in the wide sea, and so leaving him to God's good pleasure to liberate him from the peril to which he was exposed.*

---

*The punishment thus inflicted upon Bern, resembled that to which Queen Drida had been condemned, see vol. i. p. 653, of this work; and in this case it was in accordance with the law of retaliation, which prevailed amongst some of the barbarians. DUCANGE,

The forester in strict accordance with his sentence, was set adrift in the broad ocean, and a few days afterwards cast upon the coast of Denmark. The persons who guarded the harbour, at once recognized the boat in which their master Lodbroc, had been in the habit of going out to seek for wild fowl, and they therefore brought the stranger to Inguar and Hubba, the sons of the Dane who had been murdered in England. These persons, whose cruelty was equal to their power, immediately applied tortures to the person of the forester, for the purpose of extorting from him an account of what had become of their father, who had been carried away from them in the tiny boat.

Bern, who for a long time submitted to long and various tortures, at length thought of fabricating a falsehood, and told them that their father, having accidentally landed in East Anglia, had there, by the order of King Edmund, been put to death. As soon as they heard such tidings as these, they burst into tears—the certainty of their father's death filled them with a grief that was inconsolable, and they swore by their gods, that they would never permit that death to go unpunished. They declared, that the forester Bern who had come to them in their father's vessel, should be their pilot in that voyage of vengeance which they were about to make against King Edmund. They then mustered an immense army under their command, and with a fleet which bore twenty thousand sol-

---

in verb. "*talionis pœna.*" That great care, however, was frequently taken in the administration of the penalty, "ne dum talio rependitur, aut læsio major, aut periculum ingeratur," is plain from the laws of the Visigoths, lib. vi. tit. 4, § 3. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. p. 379.

diers, they directed their sails, and pointed their weapons towards the coast of the East Angles, resolved to glut their revenge upon Edmund, for a murder of which he was completely innocent.*

As soon as the Danes had laid waste, depopulated, and rendered subject to their dominion the whole of Northumbria, Inguar with a large fleet directed his course towards that part of East Anglia in which King Edmund was to be found.†

Inguar left in the north, with the spoil he had there acquired, his companion (Hubba,) whilst he, with an immense fleet, landed on a sudden upon the eastern coast.‡ He there took a town by surprise,§ and having once penetrated within its walls, he consigned it, and its innocent citizens to the flames. In the streets the throats were cut of old men and boys, whose limbs had first been broken, and the matron and maiden were made the brutal spoil of soldiers by the command of their general. The husband and the wife might be seen lying dead or dying upon the very threshold of their own homes; whilst to add to the screams of horror, which were to be heard on every side, infants were torn from the breasts of mothers, whom terror had rendered silent, and massacred before their

---

* Rog. de Wendov. vol. i. pp. 303, 304, 305, 306, 307.

† Bromton, *Chron.* p. 804.

‡ Asser, *Annal.* p. 160.

§ This was Thetford. See Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 307. He adds "castrametati quoscunque invenerunt ibi viros ac mulieres in ore gladii peremerunt." The *Sax. Chron.* ad an. 870, says, "the Danes fixed their head quarters at Thetford."

eyes.* The multitude of his victims had wearied the strength, without exhausting the diabolical rage of Inguar. By his command, there were brought before him, some plebeians, whom he deemed to be unworthy of dying by his sword, and from them he sought earnestly to know, where at that moment King Edmund was abiding.

Inguar had learned that the glorious King Edmund was then in the very flower of his age. That with the competent powers for carrying on a war, he was brave in the battle-field; and hence it was, that the Dane was eager to destroy all whom he might meet with, lest the king, supported by a sufficiently large body of fighting men, might be able to offer an effectual resistance to his assailants.

Inguar was informed that the king was then dwelling at a considerable distance from Thetford, in a vill called Hegelisdum (Hoxon) a name that is also given to the wood, which is in its neighbourhood. This most impious man believed that his proper policy was to anticipate a pitched battle, by making his soldiers slay as many as they could, for by so much the more was the waste they caused, by so much the more must the strength of the king be diminished.†

---

* ASSER, *Ann.* p. 160, "pueros et senes in plateis jugulans civitatis." BROMTON, *Chron.* p. 804.

"Maritus cum conjuge aut mortuus aut moribundus jacebat in limine; infans raptus a matris uberibus, ut major esset ejulatus, trucidibatur coram maternis obtutibus." *Abbo. MSS.* p. 3. TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons,* vol. i. p. 527. Mr. TURNER adds as if it were a matter to be wondered at, "this author (a monk) was so well acquainted with Virgil and Horace as to cite them in his little work!"

† "Existimans impiissimus ut se rei veritatis habebat quia

Inguar dispatched one of his soldiers—a man, believed by him, to be best suited for such a purpose, for he had to act as a spy and a messenger—and who was directed to present himself suddenly before the king, and threaten him, with the most frightful tortures, if he did not submit to the dire commands, which this person was entrusted to deliver to him. Inguar, followed by slow marches, and with a large army; the messenger, who himself under a fear of death being inflicted upon him by his iniquitous commander, thus addressed the unsuspecting king:—

"Our Lord Inguar, a leader to be feared alike on the "land as on the sea—an invincible viking, who has by his "arms subdued many lands, and who has lately arrived "with many ships for the purpose of establishing his "winter quarters on the wished-for shores of this "province, commands that you be permitted to reign "along with him, provided you divide with him your long "stored treasures, and whatever riches you have inherited. "Should you however despise a power which is main-"tained by numberless soldiers, then you will do that "which will be to your own prejudice, and shall be ad-"judged alike unworthy of your crown and life."*

---

quanto suus funestus satelles præoccuparet ad interitum perducere tanto, si dimicandum esset, regius occursus in exercitu contraheret minus." Asser *Ann.* p. 160. This passage is explained by the following in Ingulphus;—"Et transeuntes in Estangliam, strenuissimum comitem Wlketulum occurrentem contra eos cum exercitu, et fortissime resistentem, tandem cum suis omnibus occiderunt." *Hist.* p. 24.

* Asser's *Ann.* p. 160. This corresponds with the words given in Bromton *Chron.* p. 805. A different version of a part of the soldier's address is to be found in *Abbo*, which is thus translated by Mr. Turner:—"And who are you that should dare to withstand our power! The storm of the ocean deters not our pro-

The truly pious King Edmund groaned deeply when he heard these words, and calling for Humbert, Bishop of Elmham, he thus sought advice from him.*

"Humbert, servant of the living God, and the beloved "of my soul, you see that the host of barbarians are fast "advancing upon me. They who have destroyed a por- "tion of my dear country with its inhabitants, are now "endeavouring to destroy, utterly and for ever, that which "remains. What I wish is, that by my death, my sub- "jects may escape with their lives; for I will not, either "from a love for a temporal crown, or for the lucre of "this fleeting life, subject myself to a tyrant who is an "infidel, when dying for my country, and my people, I "may become the standard-bearer of Him, who is a king "for ever and for ever."†

To this the bishop replied—"How will it be possible, "my beloved sovereign, to save those, whom you love for "your country's sake, if you do not by instant flight, "afford them the means of future protection. Accursed "traitors will else be here, who will endeavour in your "destruction to bring ruin upon the country."

---

posed enterprise, but serves us instead of oars. Neither the loud roarings of the sky, nor its darting lightnings have ever injured us. Submit, then, with your subjects, to a master to whom even the elements are subservient." TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 528. See note 40 same page.

* ROG. DE WENDOV. vol. i. p. 308.

† The sentiments of St. Edmund as expressed by Bromton in his reply to the messenger of Inguar intimate a willingness to accede to the Northman's command, provided he became a Christian:—"Noveris quod pro amore vitæ temporalis *Christianus* rex Edmundus non subdet se *pagano* duci, *nisi prius* effectus fuerit Christianus." *Chron.* p. 805.

The most compassionate king then answered thus:—
"That which I most desire beyond all other things, is,
"that I should not survive my truly loyal and beloved
"friends, whom this truculent tyrant has foully destroyed.
"That which you suggest, would be a stain upon my
"glory—for it would be dishonourable in me not to be a
"participator in the misfortunes of a war, disastrous to
"my country. The King of Heaven is my judge and my
"witness, that no sentiment of fear for the barbarians,
"shall, in life, or in death separate me from the love of
"Christ." The blessed King Edmund turned to the messenger, who had been sent to him by the impious Inguar, and said:—

"Bedewed as thou art, with the blood of my people,
"I might well impose upon thee the penalty of death,
"which thou hast incurred. My desire, however, is to
"imitate the example of my Saviour, for whose sake, if
"it so please Him, I will willingly, and without fear lay
"down my life. Return then, quickly to thy lord, and
"bear this, as my answer to him:—

"Although thou shouldst by violence gain possession
"of all the treasures, which Divine Providence has be-
"stowed upon us, and all the property of which we stand
"possessed, still shalt thou never subject us to thy pa-
"ganism. It is honourable to defend the liberty which
"we have ever held—it is honourable also to contend for
"the purity of our faith; because for both,—we deem it
"to be no useless sacrifice to offer up, whenever it is ne-
"cessary to do so, life itself. Let thy fierce cruelty finish,
"as it has begun—having slain the servants, kill the king,
"and the King of kings, who sees and permits these things

"to be done, will remove me to Heaven, where a throne "shall be given to me, for all eternity."*

The moment, that the fierce messenger of Inguar had retired, King Edmund gave order for his soldiers to fly to arms, declaring, that it became them to fight bravely for their creed and their country—that not to do so was to act as recreants in war, and as the worst spoilers of the land. At the instance of Bishop Humbert, of his nobles, and his fellow-knights, Edmund courageously advanced with all the military forces he could collect, and boldly attacked the enemy at a short distance from the town of Thetford. There a dreadful and cruel battle took place. From morning until evening, there was a mutual and horrid slaughter on both sides. The field of conflict was made red with the blood of the dead, whose bodies lay in heaps together.† The pious King Edmund grieved not

---

* Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 309. The answer given in Asser's *Annals* is different, although equally worthy of a Christian king. "Omnipotens rerum arbiter testis assistit quod me seu vivum seu mortuum nullus separabit a charitate Christi, cujus in confessione Baptismatis suscepi annulum fidei, abrenuntiato Satano, et omnibus pompis ejus. Qua abrenuntiatione contigit, ut ad laudem et gloriam æternæ Trinitatis tertio mererer consecrari, delibutus ob compendium perennis vitæ Sanctificati Chrismatis perunctione. Primo quidem accepta stola lavacri salutaris; secundo, per confirmationem exhibitam majusculo Pontificali signaculo: tertio, ubi *nostra et totius populi communi acclamatione usus sum hac regni perfunctoria potestate.* Sicque unguento mysticæ consecrationis tripliciter irroratus Anglorum rei publicæ decrevi plus prodesse quam præesse, aspernando subdere colla jugo nisi divino servitio." Asser, *Ann.* pp. 160, 161.

† Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 310. In the winter King Edmund fought with the Danes, but they gained the victory." *Saxon Chronicle*, ad an. 870. "Eodem anno Eadmund * * * contra ipsum exercitum atrociter pugnavit." Asser. *Vit. Ælf.* p. 6, ad an. 870. "Adversus quos aptavit bellum rex Edmundus."

merely for the destruction of his soldiers, who, as they had died fighting in defence of their land, of their fellow subjects, and of the faith of Christ, he regarded as persons who had won the crown of martyrdom; but he wept with still more bitter tears, for the deaths of the unbelieving barbarians, whose souls had been cast into the pit of hell. He was then the first to retire from that which had been a place of death to so many of the Pagans, and whose dead bodies were abandoned by their retreating companions. This blessed confessor of Christ, with his surviving soldiers, proceeded to the royal vill of Hoxon, having in his own mind come to the irrevocable resolution that he would never again fight against the barbarians. His determination was expressed, as to what he thought it was necessary for him to do, in the words:—"That one man should die "for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."*

Meanwhile, Inguar, who felt equal anxiety and rage for the great loss of men which he had suffered, obtained, in the presence and the army of his brother Hubba, a considerable reinforcement to his military strength. Hubba, who had depopulated all Mercia,† arrived at Thetford with ten thousand soldiers. Both brothers united their armies for the purpose of executing their vengeance upon Saint

---

ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 2, p. 843. "Atrociter et viriliter cum suis pugnavit." ROG. DE HOVEDEN. *Ann.*, p. 416. See BROMTON, p. 805.

Mr. Sharon Turner differs from the ancient monkish historians, for he positively asserts that "Edmund displayed the sensibility of an amiable mind, but not those active talents which would have given safety to a people." *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 529.

* *St. John*, c. xxi. v. 50.

† See *Chron. Petriburg.*, p. 19.

Edmund, and they advanced by rapid marches to Hoxon, where the monarch still remained.

The orders given by Inguar were that the king should be invested on all sides, so that there should be no possibility of escape for him with his life. As soon as the holy king saw that he was surrounded by his enemies, he, by the advice of Humbert, Bishop of Elmham, repaired to the church, first to show that he was a member of the Christian community, and next, that having cast aside the arms of the flesh, he had put on the armour of Heaven; that by his humble prayers to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, they would endow him with constancy and endurance in the martyrdom to which he was about to be exposed.

From the church, the most clement King Edmund was rudely dragged forth by the ministers of iniquity, and cruelly bound with leathern thongs: he, who was innocent, was presented as our Saviour before Pilate, to be condemned by a wicked judge;* and he, in sooth, desired to follow the footsteps of HIM, who has immolated Himself as a Victim for us all.†

King Edmund, thus bound, was mocked—was subjected to many indignities; he was beaten with sticks, then being bound to a tree, his body was subjected to the severe flagellation of bitter stripes; but his spirit remained unconquered, for his weak voice was ever heard invoking the name of Christ. This made his enemies rage with madness—they determined to make his person a sort of target, at which they would discharge their arrows as if

* ROG. DE WENDOV., vol. i. pp. 308, 309, 310, 311.

† ASSER, *Ann.*, p. 161. As to the capture of St. Edmund, see *Weekly and Monthly Orthodox*, vol. i. p. 23.

they were contending for a prize. Their sharp arrow-heads soon rested in every limb—torture was multiplied by torture—pang followed pang—new wounds obliterated the old as dart followed dart, and the last discharged weapon displaced its predecessor. The palpitating form of the victim was concealed beneath wounds and arrows—it was covered with what killed it—it horrified all who beheld it, for the death shafts invested the body thickly, closely, and threateningly, as its bristles protect the hedgehog, or its prickly points guard the thistle.

The king was thus made in his martyrdom like to Saint Sebastian; but when the wicked Inguar observed that this holy martyr of God was not to be subdued by his tormentors, and that the voice of Edmund was constantly uplifted in appeals to our Saviour, he commanded one of the executioners to strike off his head on the spot. Edmund, in whose warm heart the pulse of life still beat, almost incapable of movement, and his body covered with the ensanguined arrow points, was torn quickly from the stake to which he had been bound, and compelled to lay upon the block that head which hitherto had been adorned by the royal diadem. Whilst he remained, as the gentle sheep which is chosen from the entire flock, as a fitting victim for the altar, his spirit, which was fixed upon the happy exchange he was about to make, was blessed with a vision of the joys, in which he was on the point of participating, and whilst his lips were pronouncing a prayer, the executioner drew his sword, and with a single blow, decapitated the martyr. Thus was the martyr of God, Edmund, tried in the fire of affliction, offered up as a grateful holocaust to the Divinity, on the twelfth of the kalends of

December (20th of November),* and on that day was the martyred king, bearing the palm of victory, and the crown of justice, permitted to enter the Holy Court of Heaven—carrying with him the cross of mortification, which as a king he had ever borne, whilst he followed, and thus completed his desire to follow, the footsteps and example of our Lord Jesus Christ.†

The decapitated body of the martyr‡ was abandoned by the ministers of Satan, whilst his head was carried into Hoxon wood, and there cast into a place, thickly overgrown with brambles; for those willing workers in iniquity were most anxious that the few surviving Christians should be deprived of the opportunity of consigning, with becoming respect to the grave, the perfect remains of king Edmund.

The wicked pirates, Inguar and Hubba, had been informed that it was in the wood of Hoxon, that their father Lodbrog had been assassinated; and hence, acting upon the false information of the forester Bern, they had, as a species of retaliation, ignominiously cast into the same wood the head of Edmund, in order that it might be devoured by the birds and beasts.§

---

* "The 20th of November was the day of his catastrophe, which was so interesting, that the Islander, Ada Frode, makes it one of the steps of his chronology, p. 7. He was canonized. His memory was much venerated, and his name still exists in our calendars." TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 530, note 43.

† ASSER, *Ann.*, p. 161.

‡ "Corpus ita truncum et aculeis hirsutum." ASSER, p. 161.

§ "Avibus cœli tradentes et bestiis devorandum." ROG. DE WEND. "Is tandem belli exitus erat, ut rex Ottarus, cum majore exercitus sui parte cæsus caderet. Cujus dein cadaver Dani ad

Humbert, the Bishop of Elmham, the constant companion of Edmund, suffered martyrdom at the same time with the sovereign he had aided in placing on the throne,

---

terram delatum, superque collem positum, a feris alitibusque dilaniari passi sunt." SNORRO. (*Inglinga Saga.* c. 31,) vol. i. p. 36. (Peringskiöld, Stockholm, 1697). The barbarity exhibited to Edmund was we perceive characteristic of the usual treatment experienced by those who were conquered by the Northmen. They were not less pitiless to each other than to strangers. Thus we find them hanging their prisoners in war even when that prisoner was a king. In the *Inglinga Saga*, ch. 26, we are told of a King Godlogus, who being defeated in battle—" mox in continentem delatus, ubi nunc est Stromœnas, suspendio ibidem necatus est," and in chapter 28, this is the fate of another king. " Ipse (Jorundus) vero, dum in mare se projecit, capitur, et ad terram perductus est, ubi rex Gyleigus erecto patibulo eum suspendi jussit." (SNORRO, vol. i. pp. 28, 30.) So common was this practise, that it is declared by Mr. Laing, that " Odin was the god of the hanged; and Odin's horse was a name for the gallows." (*Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 238, note 1.) If a worse death than strangulation were inflicted upon St. Edmund, still his martyrdom was a merciful mode of death compared with that which was practised by Northmen on prisoners—that of " cutting a spread eagle, (rista örn) which is described in the 31st chapter of Konung Harald Harfager's Saga :—

" Thereafter Earl Einar went up to Halfdan, and cut a spread " eagle upon his back, by striking his sword through his back into " his belly, dividing his ribs from the back-bone down to his loins, " and tearing out his lungs: and so Halfdan was killed. *Einar " then sung!* &c." (LAING'S *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 299.) See SNORRO, vol. i. p. 107.

Such a dreadful death as this, it is declared by the Danish historian was inflicted upon Ella, king of Northumbria; and accompanied with circumstances of peculiar barbarity. " Idque statuto tempore executi, comprehensi ipsius dorsum plaga aquilam figurante affici jubent, sævissimum hostem atrocissimi alitis signo profligare gaudentes. Nec vulnus impressisse contenti, *laceratam salivere carnem.*" SAXO. GRAMMAT. *Hist. Danic.*, lib. ix. p. 177. (Ed. 1646). See also BERING *Florus Danicus*, pp. 173, 174. TORFÆUS. *Hist. Norveg.*, lib. 10, c. 52, vol. i. p. 501. (Ed. 1711.) The latter adds, lib. i. c. 31, that the lungs of the victim, thus slain, were offered up to Odin. See vol. ii. p. 252. See also

and having animated his master to endure with patience the pains of death, he also in dying with him, was made his companion in the Kingdom of Heaven.

---

lib. 9. c. 4, vol. ii. p. 376, for the details of a still more torturing death. It was even a common practice with these brutal men to burn kings in their own houses. See *Inglinga Saga*, c. 17, 35, 43; *Konung Harald Harfagers Saga*, c. 12. SNORRO, vol. i. pp. 18, 40, 50, 85.

It is gratifying to contrast with such barbarities the conduct of a christian king, when he had conquered his enemies. In the battle of Fontenay won in 841, by Charles the Bald, we are told by the historian, Nithard.

"Missa peracta, amicos et inimicos fideles *et infideles* pariter sepulturæ tradebant; plaga correptos ac semivivos, eodem modo pro viribus ex animo refovebant. *Post hos, qui fuga evaserant miserunt afferentes, si reverti sana fide vellent, omnia delicta remitti.*" NITHARD, *Hist.*, lib. iii. c. i. We are assured by this writer that upon the conquerors at Fontenay the bishops imposed "confession" "prayers for the dead," and "a fast of three days."

"At quicumque conscius sibi aut ira, aut odio, aut vana gloria, aut certe quolibet vitio quiddam in hac expeditione suasit, vel gessit, esset vere confessus secrete, secreti delicti, et secundum modum culpæ dijudicaretur. Veruntamen in veneratione ac laude tantæ declarationis justitiæ, pro remissione, delictis mortuorum fratrum suorum, &c. &c. Proque his omnibus triduanum jejunium injunctum, immoque libenter ac celebre celebratum est." (Nithard). The same author also mentions, that when it was necessary to transfer the relics of saints from one church to another, the merciful conqueror in the same year in which he had won this victory, bore them on his own shoulders—"Beatorum corpora propriis humeris cum omni veneratione transtulit." NITHARD, lib. iii. c. 2. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. pp. 23, 24.

The same monarch, who had a great veneration for the saints, also regarded the Bible as the most priceless of gifts. Thus, in the joy of his victory at Fontenay, we are told of his presenting to a monastery, priestly vestments, two chalices of gold, and a magnificent copy of the Gospels—"Sacerdotale indumentum," "duo vasa aurea pondo librarum * * appretiata, cum Evangelii textu subtile aperis diversitate fabricato." Ex append. Adelev. Mon. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 361.

Thus do Christians and infidels at all periods of history distinguish themselves by their respective "works."

The Pagans, who gloried in having destroyed the blessed king of East Anglia, established their winter quarters in East Anglia, and expelled from it the few inhabitants who had escaped the preceding massacres.*

In the course of the same year died Inguar.†

One man, a Christian, was permitted, as we believe, by Divine Providence, to be the hidden witness of the preceding horrible scene, and to escape the swords of the Pagans, in order that through his means, the truth might be made known, although he was utterly ignorant what the Pagans had done with the head of the martyr, beyond the fact that he observed they carried it in the direction of Hoxon wood.‡ Wherefore it occurred, that as soon as something like peace was restored to the church, the Christians began to creep out from the hiding places in which they had concealed themselves, and to make diligent search for the head of their martyred sovereign, in order that they might unite it to the body, and according to their poor means, consign both to the earth, with all the befitting honor it was in their power to bestow. Upon the departure of the Pagans, who had left the memorial of their presence in the desolation of every place where they had been, the sanctified body of the king was found in the open air, and upon the very spot where he had been put to death. The people thought of the past good government of the king, upon his innate tenderness and

---

* Rog. de Wend, vol. i, p. 312, "totam illam regionem suo dominio subdiderunt." Asser. *Ann.* p. 162.

† "Et eorum rex anno in eodem obiit Iuvar." Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. 2. p. 843.

‡ Asser, *Ann.* p. 162.

mercy, and as they readily gathered together to manifest their respect for his memory, they deeply and sorely lamented that any portion of his remains should lie unburied.

It pleased the goodness of Heaven to inspire some who had heard the narrative of the man, who was a witness to the mighty spectacle (of martyrdom) * that they should collect together an immense multitude, and that all should traverse in every way every portion of the wood, however obscure, or apparently impervious and inaccessible, in the hope, that they might thus be able to light upon the spot where the head of the holy martyr had been cast. It was considered by the wise and the reflecting as a fact, with respect to which there could not be any doubt, that the followers of a foreign sect moved by envy against our faith had carried away the martyr's head,† and concealed it in some obscure part of the thick forest, by burying it, either beneath some common mould of earth, or exposing it to the fowls of the air to be devoured and destroyed.

All, who were on this occasion collected together, were animated with the same desire, and all anxious to attain the same object. The plan then adopted by them in making their search was, that each should provide hinself

---

* "Qui tantæ visioni, ut dictum est, particeps astiterat." ASSER. See BROMTON *Chron.* p. 806.

† "Pro certo etenim omnibus vera sapientibus inerat, quod alienæ sectæ cultores invidendo nostræ fidei sustulissent caput martyris." ASSER. This was said with respect to Pagan idolaters. It was never supposed, when this was written, that any sect calling themselves "Christians" could possibly arise, who should be found to imitate the Danish worshippers of Odin.

with a horn or a trumpet, by the sound of which he might indicate both where he was, and where he had been, so that such spots as had been examined should not be searched a second time, and such as had not been visited might undergo an examination. The search was thus begun; and then occurred a miraculous circumstance and such as has been unheard of in past ages; for the head of the holy king—far removed as it was from his body—unaided by muscular power, or mental impulse, obtained vocality. Whilst the searchers proceeded slowly, deliberately, and step by step, (like men carrying a funereal burden), through the hitherto untrodden ways of the wood, and when each indicating his presence to a distant companion cried aloud—"where art thou?" the interrogatory was ever replied to from the spot where the head was lying, by the words, "her," "her," "her," that which signifies in the language in which we write "here," "here," "here,"* and these words were constantly so emitted, until all were attracted to the one thing, from which they had emanated. The tongue, rendered mute by death, found utterance between the moveless lips and in the gaping mouth; thus manifesting the magnitude of the Incarnate Word, which once unloosed the jaws of the ass, in order that they might syllable the words of man and rebuke the foolish prophet. This was the first miracle, which Christ conceded to His martyr: many others were soon conferred, and many others are

* "Et utpote socii ad socium alternatim clamantium ubi es, illud respondebat designando locum, patria lingua dicens *her*, *her*, *her*, quod interpretatum latinus sermo exprimit *hic*, *hic*, *hic*." ASSER.

still granted to St. Edmund, by Him, Who lives for ever and for ever.*

---

* Asser, *Ann.* p. 162. See Rog. de Wendov. vol. i. p. 313. and as to the translation of the martyr's remains to Bury St, Edmunds, p. 314; also Bromton *Chron.* pp. 806, 807. Fordun. *Hist. Scot.* lib. iv. c. 16, 18, pp. 668, 669. *Chron. Mailros*, ad an. 870, p. 143. Wallingford *Chron.* p. 534. W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. i. § 97, lib. ii. § 120, 213. Baronius, vol. xv. pp. 216, 217, § 42, 43. Alford, *Ann. Eccl. Ang.* vol. iii. pp. 114, 115, 116, 117, 118. § 20 to 28, ad an. 870. § 2 to 7, ad an. 871. Robert of Gloucester, vol. i. p. 263. (Hearne.) Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. xi. pp. 904, 905, 906, 907. *Britannia Sancta*, vol. ii. pp. 293, 296. Harpsfield *Hist. Eccl. Ang. Non. Sæc.* c. 8. pp. 165, 166, 167. Leland *Collectanea*, vol. i. pp. 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 413, vol. iii. pp. 26, 71. Rapin's *History of England*, vol. i. p. 88, note 5. (folio edition). Hollinshed's *Chronicle*, vol. i. p. 667. Wadderspoon's *Historic Sites of Suffolk*, pp. 127, 128. Lappenberg's *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 39. (Thorpe's translation). Turner's *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 530.

It will be perceived from the preceding accounts of the fatal transactions in England of the year 870, that the old English historians ascribe two causes for the overwhelming invasion of this country by the Northmen. First, that these barbarians were invited to Northumbria by Bruern Brocard, to avenge the injury done to him by King Osbrith. Secondly, that Inguar and Hubba came especially to revenge the death of their father Ragnar Lodbroc, who had been put to death, as they supposed, by King Edmund. Such are the accounts given by the old monkish historians, and they therefore will be found in the text. Another cause is however ascribed to these calamities. Ragnar Lodbroc's death, it is observed by the Rev. Dr. Lingard, "was known to the English chroniclers; but they were ignorant of the reasons which induced his sons to attempt the conquest of our island. The industry of Mr. Turner has discovered the real cause in the Northern historians." (*History of England*, vol. i. p. 155, 12mo. ed. 1837.) Mr. Turner, it must be admitted, does give a most interesting account of Ragnar Lodbroc (*History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. pp. 474, 475, 476, 477, 478), whose achievements, or rather

Cœlnoth, the Archbishop of Canterbury died this

---

crimes in France and England he traces with that zeal, energy and research, for which he deserves to be ever respected. Mr. Turner also gives a valuable translation of detached portions of the celebrated death song of Ragnar, and in p. 478, declares that he must have been put to death by Ella, King of Northumbria, between the years 862 and 867, when Ella, he says, "doomed his illustrious prisoner to perish with lingering pain in a dungeon stung by venomous snakes." This statement rests upon the authority of the Northern historians. They certainly do make such statement, but Mr. Turner himself proves (vol. i. pp. 460, 461, 462, 463, 464), that little, if any, reliance can be placed on the Northern historians; whilst Mr. Laing, with all his enthusiasm for Northern literature, admits that "there are no fixed points in the history of the North before the middle of the ninth century." *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 74.

The question is, which are more deserving of attention and respect upon a point of English history—the monkish historians of England, or the Northern writers? The first mention that in the year 794, the monastery of Weremouth was destroyed by the Northern pirates, and that these pirates were defeated, and their leader put to death, by torture—"princeps eorum crudele nece est occisus," (ROG. DE HOVEDEN, *Ann.* p. 407. S. DUNELM, pp. 112, 113), and that this person was named Ragnar Lodbroc is very probable. (LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 31.) But what we consider as difficult is to make out a consistent narrative, from the inconsistencies of the Northern historians, some of whom describe Ragnar Lodbroc as being put to death in England, and others as to his having been stung to death by *snakes in Ireland!* (See PONTOPIDDAN *Gesta et Vestigia Danorum extra Daniam*, vol. ii. pp. 26, 27, 28, 29, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306.) We cannot consent to adopt them as the best authorities, when we find one of the most able, and astute of modern historians declaring that the various narratives which have been told of Ragnar Lodbroc, prove "that the exploits of *several persons* have been cumulatively ascribed to *one*." (GEIJER'S *History of the Swedes*, vol. i. p. 14, *translated* by J. H. TURNER, M.A.)

There is a consistency, in our estimation, to be found in the monkish historians, which is wanting in the Northern writers, and as far as the latter are supported by the former, we believe them, and no further. Although we cannot think the Northern writers to be preferred to the historians of England, we feel that Mr.

year, and was succeeded by Ethered, bishop of Wiltshire.*

In the year 871, the army of the Pagans (whose memory is ever worthy of detestation), abandoned the East Anglian district, and marched into the kingdom of the West Saxons, as far as Reading, a royal vill situated on the south bank of the river Thames.† Upon the third day after establishing themselves in this vill, which is in Berkshire, their generals, with a great portion of their army, rode forth in search of spoil, whilst the remainder

---

Turner has done good service, in attracting attention towards them and founding a theory upon their statements—a theory the originality of which is, in opposition to the judgment of Dr. Lingard, to be denied to him; for a high authority on such points says; "Verstegan had long before our author" (Mr. Sharon Turner) "imperfectly discovered the real cause of this Danish invasion." (*Edinburgh Review*, vol. ii. p. 363.)

More research and criticism has been bestowed upon this subject, perhaps, than it merits; and yet, we cannot part from it without calling attention to the coincidence which there appears in the crimes imputed to Edmund by the sons of Ragnar Lodbroc, and those charged against *Jatmund*, a king of England, by Skollius a pirate. In the latter case the allies of the invader were two vikings named Oddus and Hialmar, who constituted themselves as judges, heard the plaints against Jatmund by witnesses, "testimonio consentium colonorum;" and having decided against him, fought with Skollius against his soldiers for three days, and finally put him to death. The pirates then not only established their winter quarters in the lands of Jatmund, but took possession of his kingdom. "Prælium illud in insulæ parte australi gestum memoratur, sine tamen alteriore loci mentione." TORFÆUS, *Hist. Norvegic.* lib 6, c. 5. vol. i. pp. 271, 272.

* *Sax. Chron.* A.D. 871.

† ASSER, *Ann.* ad an. 872, p. 162.

were occupied in forming a fortification on the right flank of Reading, between the Thames and the Kennet. An encounter took place between these last mentioned Pagans and the Ealdorman of Berkshire, Ethelwulf, and his fellow soldiers. The battle was fought at a place called Englefield. It was a conflict bravely disputed on both sides, and neither seemed disposed to give way to its opponent, until at length the death of one of the jarls,* and the destruction of the greater part of the common soldiers, forced the few remaining infidels to flight, and they thus bequeathed a blood-stained battle field, as a place of triumph to their Christian adversaries.

Four days after this victory, Ethered, King of the West Saxons, and his brother Alfred, having collected all their forces together, marched with their entire army into Reading. They conducted their forces up to the very gate of the fortification established by the Danes, slaying or putting to flight all the Pagans who had ventured outside of the walls to resist them. The Pagans fought with great vigour. Wolf-like they put forth all their animosity, their rage and their strength in a conflict, which was contended with equal courage and animosity, until at length, oh! grief of griefs! the Christians turned their backs upon their foes, and fled from the battle ground. There fell amongst others, the before mentioned Ealdorman Ethelwulf; and the Christians inflamed alike with grief and shame for such a loss, were four days afterwards to be found again in a conflict with the Pagan invaders. This last battle took place at Ashdown,† and there the Chris-

* The *Saxon Chronicle* states, that the name of the Dane slain at Englefield, was Sidroc, ad an. 872.

† "Æscesdum, quod latine Mons Fraxim interpretatur." Asser.

tians shewed that they had come to the strife with well united strength, and a firmly determined spirit.

The Pagans separated their army into two divisions, and prepared for the fate of war in two compact tortoise-like and therefore apparently impregnable bodies.* There were two kings and several jarls, in command of the Pagan armies; and the centre part of each of their lines was confided to the kings, whilst the wings were commanded by the jarls. The Christians upon observing the disposition of the Pagan forces, imitated their example, by separating their forces into two divisions, and forming each into a close and compact phalanx.

Alfred (as it has been stated by accurate and truthful eye-witnesses of these facts),† eager for the strife advanced too quickly to the field of battle; for at that time his brother Ethered, was engaged with his devotions in his tent. There the king was hearing mass, and from thence he declared, that with life, he never would stir until the priest had finished the mass; because, he said, he preferred the service of God to the service of man.‡ And that which he said he would do, he did. How great was the profit to the Christians, of this confidence in God, the exposition of the events immediately succeeding will soon shew.

It had been determined by the Christians, that King Ethered and his soldiers should commence the battle, by an attack upon the two Pagan kings, whilst his brother

---

* "Sed Pagani in duas se turmas dividentes æquali lance testudines parant." ASSER, p. 163.

† "Sicut ab his qui viderunt veredicis referentibus audivimus." ASSER, p. 163.

‡ "— Audiens Missam, et nimium affirmans se inde vivum non discessurum, antequam sacerdos Missam finiret, et divinum pro humano nolle deserens servitium." ASSER, p. 163.

Alfred, and the cohorts under his command, should try the fortune of war against all the inferior vikings of the Pagans.

Such was the order of battle, and so it had been finally, and fixedly determined that it should be conducted. The king, Ethered, was still however engaged in prayer—he seemed to delay in his devotions when the Pagans fully prepared for battle, quickly advanced to the place of conflict. Alfred, then second in power and command, could no longer refrain from an attack on the hostile ranks—he must as he conceived, either retreat from battle, or he must attack the enemies' lines, before his brother appeared in the field. Then, even in the absence of his brother, he took upon himself the command of the soldiers, and placing all his confidence in the aid of Heaven, he formed his forces into a tortoise-like body, instantly moved forward his standards, and valiantly rushed, as the wild boar rushes, upon the ranks of the foemen.* And here it may be noted to those who are ignorant of the fact, that the place in which the battle was fought, was by no means a fair field of fight for the respective combatants; for the Pagans had contrived to pre-occupy a more elevated tract of ground, whilst the Christians marched up against them as from a hollow. In the same place, there was a solitary thorny stunted tree—a tree, on which we have looked with our own eyes;† and around that tree closed with a horrid clamour the ranks of either army—those doers of evil,

* "Viriliter, aprino more." ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 7.

† "Quam nos ipsi nostris propriis oculis vidimus." ASSER, *Ann.* p. 163. *Vit. Ælf.* p. 7. Although Asser is so particular in pointing out the locality of this great battle, there is now great uncertainty existing respecting it. See TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 534, note 52.

these contending for life, their loved ones, and their country.

For some time both Christians and Pagans fought a most desperate fight; those with the courage of men, and these, with the furious rage of brutes, when the Pagans, stricken with the Divine Judgment, were no longer able to endure the attack of the Christians, but, having lost the greater part of their force, sought for safety in a shameful flight.

There was killed on that spot one of the two kings of the Pagans, and with him five of their jarls, and many thousand of the common men, in addition to those, who, scattered over the wide face of the country, were far and near put to death, wherever they were overtaken.

Here fell king *Baseg*, and the jarls *Sidroc* the elder, and *Sidroc* the younger, and Osbearn, and *Frena*, and Harold,* whilst the entire army compelled to disperse, fled during the entire night and even the following day,† until they had at last found a place of refuge in the fortress they had erected. The Christians pursued them until nightfal, and massacred all those with whom they could come up.

---

* See as to those whose names are Italicised, INGULPHUS, *Hist.* p. 20. (Gale), p. 865. (*Script. post Bedam*), and pp. 104—112, of this volume. As to Sidroc, see TURNER'S *Hist. Anglo Saxons*, vol i. p. 534, note 50.

† This great victory is ascribed by William of Malmesbury to a miracle,—conceded to the pious king Ethered, because he entered into the battle "signed with the cross of Christ."

"Namque jam acies Anglorum declinabant, et urgentibus ex alto adversariis fugam meditabuntur, quod iniquo Christianis loco pugnaretur: cum ille *cruce Dei consignatus* ex insperato advolat, hostem proturbans, civem in arma ciens, cujus virtute simul et Dei miraculo Dani territi pedibus salutem committentes, fugere."—*Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. §. 119. and p. 42. (*Script. post Bedam*).

Fourteen days after this victory king Ethered and his brother Alfred united their forces, and attacked the Pagan army at Basing. There another long, and desperate, conflict took place; and the Pagans obtained the victory, and remained masters of the field. At the close of this battle, another army of the Pagans, which had come from across the sea, gave by their alliance additional strength to the invaders.*

Two months afterwards king Ethered and his brother Alfred fought at a place called Merdon† with the army of the Danes.‡ The latter had divided their force into two distinct bodies. Both were first put to flight by the Christians, who were for a portion of the day in the actual enjoyment of victory. The slaughter on both sides was dreadful, and finally the Danes became masters of the field.§ In this battle was killed bishop Edmund, and with him many of the leading nobility of England.‖

Immediately upon the close of this battle one of the leaders of the Danes named Somerled, returning to Reading, destroyed that vill and all who inhabited it. This brought on a conflict between him and king Ethered, in

---

* Asser, *Ann.* pp. 162, 163, 164, *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 6, 7. (Camden's ed.)

† See Camden's *Britannia*, vol. i. pp. 159, 160. Leland's *Collectanea*, vol. i. p. 193. Turner's *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 535, note 55.

‡ *Saxon Chronicle*, A.D. 872.

§ *Saxon Chronicle.*

‖ H. Hunt., *Hist.*, lib. v. p. 349. "Ibi ruit ferro interemptus Heahmundus Episcopus, suumque corpus jacet sepultum in loco Cægineshamme."—Ethelwerd, lib. iv. p. 843. "Scireburnensis episcopus."—Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 317.

which the latter was mortally wounded, and having suffered much agony, expired on the 23rd of April, and in the fifth year of his reign.* His body was subsequently interred at Winburn.†

In this year (872) alone there were fought in that portion of England which lies south of the Thames nine pitched battles against the Danes,‡ independent of the many conflicts, in which Alfred the king's brother, the caldormen, and the thanes of the king were engaged, and of which no especial account has been taken.§

The reader will bear in mind, that during this period the kings of the Mercians and the Northumbrians, took advantage of the coming of the Danes, and of the constant battles, in which Ethered was engaged against them, to shake off from themselves that service which they were bound to pay to the West Saxon sovereign, and to recover the independence, and supreme domination of which each had formerly been possessed.‖ All the provinces of the land were therefore laid desolate with fire and the sword. Each of those kings preferred awaiting the shock of the common enemy, within the limits of his own principality, rather than give a timely aid to his fellow-countrymen the instant they were afflicted; for whilst they chose

---

* Bromton, *Chron.* p. 809.

† Rudborne, *Hist. Mag. Winton*, lib. iii. c. 5, p. 206. See Flor. Wigorn., p. 557.

‡ "And thaes geares wurdon nigen folc-ge-feoht gefohten with thone here on thy cyne-rice be suthan Temese."—*Sax. Chron.*

§ *Saxon Chronicle*, 872, "—præter subitos excursus, quibus bellicæ artis gnarus populatores palantes crebro afflixit." — W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 118.

‖ W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 120.

to avenge an injury when inflicted, rather than to anticipate and prevent the possibility of its being perpetrated, they by their own inertness exhausted the nation of its best blood, and rendered it incapable of resistance. The obstacle to the triumph of the Danes was thus removed, fear was instilled into the hearts of the inhabitants of all the provinces, and every fresh victory of the foe, by adding to the number of their captives was employed as an instrument to achieve and secure their subsequent successes.*

As to the king of the Mercians, Beohred, he had during a portion of this time been employed in making war upon the Welsh, who by their frequent incursions had harassed the western frontier of the Mercian dominions.† Upon hearing however that the Danes had attacked and frightfully wasted the eastern parts of his kingdom, he proceeded to London, mustered a large army, and marched through the eastern provinces of his kingdom, applying to the purposes of his treasury, the whole of the isle of Ely; then advancing to the lands of the Girnii he took into his own possession all the estates belonging to the monastery of Peterborough (viz., the lands lying between Stanford, Huntingdon and Wisebeck, which formerly were attached to that monastery,) whilst its more distant possessions, which were scattered over different parts of the country, he assigned to his stipendiary soldiers. He did the same with the lands belonging to the monastery of St. Pega of Reikirk, some of which he held in his own hands, and some he bestowed on his soldiers: the same thing also did he with the lands belonging to the monastery of St. Guthlac

---

* W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 120.

† Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 868. (*Script. post Bedam*).

of Croyland; for some he distributed amongst his stipendiary soldiers, and the others he confiscated to his own use.*

---

* Ingulphus, *Hist.* p. 868. (*Script. post Bedam*).

See *Chron. Petriburgense*, p. 23. (*Giles*). Some of the lands thus unjustly taken from the monasteries were never restored. Ingulphus mentions a few of these:

"Recesserunt ergo illo tempore de dicto monasterio *Croyland*, et usque ad præsentem diem non redierunt illæ possessiones; scilicet manerium de *Spalding*, datum Adelwulpho Comiti, cum omnibus pertinentiis suis; manerium de *Crorton*, datum Fernodo militi, et vexillario regis, cum omnibus pertinentiis suis: manerium de *Kirkoton* et *Kimerby* in Lindesie cum omnibus pertinentiis datum Comiti Turgoto," p. 868.

These do not include all the confiscations of monastic property made by the Mercian sovereign (see pp. 868, 869.) They are however sufficient to indicate the many miserable consequences that followed from the invasion of the Danes, and how deeply injurious to religion that invasion must have been. Here we perceive that the monasteries and convents whose inmates had been martyred by the infidel Danes were despoiled of their property, by a bad christian king, who took advantage of their misfortunes to enrich himself and his military dependents. To these spoliations of church property, combined with the persecution of priests, monks and nuns by infidel invaders, or by sovereigns and nobles alike unworthy of the name of Christians, may be traced those disorders which brought discredit upon Catholicity, and the reform of which was sought for, in succeeding times, by the popes of Rome, and the most distinguished saints of the church.

We have only stated some of the details of what occurred in a single year, 872, and in a single portion of England—the Mercian kingdom. From these details the reader may infer what occurred in England, and in every nation of the continent, whether invaded by the Danes, the Normans, or the Mohammedans. The clouds that covered the Church, and obscured Christianity, during what are termed "the dark ages," arose from exterior circumstances, and not from anything that occurred within the pale of religion. The constant struggle, it will be found, was made by those, whom the Catholic Church now recognises, and has always recognised, as "saints," to reform abuses, to put an end to improper practises, to punish simony, to correct impurities, to vindicate the

independence of the church, to dispel, in brief, the darkness of "the dark ages," by restoring to earth, and preparing for heaven, a pious laity, a learned, exemplary, and continent priesthood.

We have, in this chapter, purposely given at great length the statements, as they are to be found in the monkish historians, of the cruelties perpetrated, the barbarities inflicted, and the ravages effected by the invading Northmen in different parts of England. The events especially of the years (870, 871, 872), shew how ruthless and how merciless were these invaders, and how much their evil deeds, and bad example must have tended to barbarise the country. Alfred, in his letter to Fulco the archbishop of Rheims, declared that the decline of the ecclesiastical order was mainly to be attributed to "the frequent irruption and attacks of the Northmen." (See TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 91, note 27). These events also demonstrate that nothing can be more erroneous, because nothing can be more opposed to the facts of history, than to suppose that the Danish invasion never met with any thing beyond a "trifling resistance." The details which we have given from the best authorities, and some of these contemporary, shew, that in such a paragraph as the following, in reference to the Danish invasion and the condition of England at that period, there is a mistake in every line, and a misstatement in every assertion.

"The spirit, character, and national vigour of the old Anglo-Saxon branch of this people, had evidently become extinct under the influence and pressure of the Church of Rome upon the energies of the human mind. This abject state of the mass of the old christianised Anglo-Saxons, is evident from the trifling resistance they made to the small piratical bands of Danes or Northmen who infested and settled on their coasts. It is evident that the people had neither energy to fight, nor property, laws, or institutions to defend, and were merely serfs on the land of nobles, or of the Church, who had nothing to lose by a change of masters."—LAING'S *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. pp. 8, 9.

It must be manifest to the reader of this chapter, that the respectable gentleman who has taken the trouble of writing such a paragraph as the above could never have occupied his valuable time in perusing any of the authorities we have quoted. He seems to have been impressed with the conviction that they were not worth reading, for he includes them all in the following sweeping condemnation :—

"Our early historians, from the venerable Bede downwards, however accurate in the events and dates they record, and however valuable for this accuracy, are undeniably *the dullest of chroniclers. They were monks*, ignorant of the world beyond their convent

walls, recording the deaths of their abbots, the legends of their founders, and the miracles of their sainted brethren, as the most important events in history; *the facts being stated without exercise of judgment, or inquiry after truth, the fictions with a dull credulity unenlivened by a single gleam of genius*" (*!!!*) LAING'S *Chronicles of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 11.

We ought perhaps to leave here the question of Mr. Laing's fairness as a historian, and his competency as a critic, to the unbiassed judgment of the reader; and we certainly would do so, if Mr. Laing's animosity to the monkish historians, founded upon his want of knowledge of their writings, had not emboldened him to affirm that even as poets and historians, the Northmen were superior to the Anglo Saxon monks! We give this assertion in the words of Mr. Laing:—

"It might be surmised by a philosophic reader of the history of those times, that all the vigorous action and energy of mind of these barbarous Danes or Northmen could not be showing itself only in deeds of daring enterprise abroad, that some of it must be expending itself at home, and in other arts and uses than those of a predatory warfare. It will not, at least, surprise such a reader that some of this mental power was applied at home, in attempts, however rude, at history and poetry; but he will be surprised to find that *those attempts surpass, both in quality and quantity all that can be produced of Anglo Saxon literature during the same ages, either in the Anglo Saxon language or in the Latin.*" LAING'S *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 15.

Is there any truth, or even the semblance of truth in these assertions? Undeniable facts and the admissions of Mr. Laing himself shall decide the question.

The reader will observe that the period of history at which we are now arrived is approaching the close of the ninth century; and that previous to that period there had been the Anglo Saxon poet Cædmon—a considerable body of Anglo Saxon literature, (See TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, book ix. c. 1, 2, 3, 4, vol. iii. pp. 261, 358. ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 13. and the frequent mention of the "Saxonicos libros et maxime Saxonica carmina") —that amongst the Latin poets were Aldhelm, Bede, Boniface, Leobgitha, Cena, Ethelwald, Alcuin—that amongst the historians and scholars, whose writings are still read with pleasure, were Gildas, Nennius, Aldhelm, Bede, Boniface, Eddius, Alcuin, Asser. (For a list of writers previous to this period, see LELAND *de Scriptoribus Britannicis*, pp. 51 to 155; WRIGHT'S *Biographica Britannica Literaria*, from Wilfred in the seventh century to Alfred at the commencement of the tenth, vol. i. pp. 164 to 384.) And with these we must bear in mind, not only the mass of Saxon literature

destroyed by the Danes, but that Saxon manuscripts were diligently sought after by the Normans for the purpose of being destroyed. See Preface to PETER LANGTOF'S *Chronicle*, § 8, pp. xxix, xxx.

During all this period of time, what was the amount of literature possessed by the Northmen? Mr. Laing himself shall answer the question. "*Until the beginning of the 12th century*," he says, it was "*an oral not a written literature.*" (*Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 27). And so far were the Northmen, as he has asserted, (vol. i. p. 15,) from being engaged in literature whilst carrying on a predatory warfare, that it is not until that horrid practice fell into disrepute, that they commenced having any thing deserving of a name of literature. Mr. Laing thus proves both these points:—

"It is known that in the 12th century Are, Frode, Sæmund and others began to take their sagas out of the traditionary state and fix them in writing." Vol. i. p. 24.

"The last piratical expeditions were about the end of the 12th century." Vol. i. p. 112.

But as to the literature itself of these Northmen, which Mr. Laing (vol. i. p. 15,) declares surpasses "both in quality and quantity" all the writings of Bede, of Alcuin, Aldhelm, Boniface and Cædmon, not to mention a single author during the ninth and succeeding centuries, let us see what he himself says of *that*, which he affirms is *so superior* to "all that can be produced of Anglo Saxon literature!"

The curious assertion is made by Mr. Laing; and he has in the following passages, had the kindness to afford a most satisfactory refutation to it. This is his own description of the literature of the Northmen:—

"The extraordinary metaphors and mythological allusions, the epithets so long-winded and obscure, the never-ending imagery of wolves glutted, and ravens feasted by the deeds of the warriors, arise evidently from the necessity imposed on the scald of finding alliteratives, and conforming to the other strict rules of their versification. The beauty of this artificial construction is lost even upon the best Icelandic scholars of our times; and it appears to have been the only beauty, many of these pieces of poetry ever pretended to, for the ideas so expressed are often not in any way poetical." (Vol. i. p. 208.)

"It will not escape the observation of the English reader that in the ideas there is a very tedious monotony in the descriptions of battles and bloodshed, in the imagery of war, in the epithets applied to the warriors and kings; and in general, there is a want of sentiment or feeling. The spirit is altogether material." (Vol. i. p. 210.)

"Torfæus, who was himself an Icelander, and was unquestionably the first of northern antiquarians, declares that much of the scaldic poetry is so obscure, that *no meaning at all can be twisted out of it by the most intense study.*" (Vol. i. p. 206.)

Thus it is that Mr. Laing refutes himself! his assertions are contradicted by his facts—and these facts are irrespective of others of which he is not aware; for when he declared, that the Icelandic scalds have produced a greater impression upon the literature of Europe, than any of the Anglo Saxon writers (vol. i. p. 64), he seems to have been utterly unconscious, that the composition of one of them, the humblest, and the poorest of all, the herdsman-monk, Cædmon, constitutes what may be regarded as the groundwork of the noblest poem in any language, Milton's "Paradise Lost," (see TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. iii. pp. 314, 324.)

We have dwelt at much length upon this point; but when an able writer like Mr. Laing, lends his talents to the propagation of error, he is worthy at least of refutation, *in his own words.* He attacks the ancient writers of England, because they were monks; and we have desired to shew that their fame could be vindicated, even by the admissions of their assailant, who having first disparaged the priests of Christianity, and attempted to prove that they were inferior to the pagan scalds, at last, under the pressure of an undeniable truth, is compelled to acknowledge that when the two came in contact, the scald had to give way to the superior learning, abilities and genius of the catholic clergyman.

"Before the introduction of Christianity, and with Christianity the use of written documents, and the diffusion by the church establishment, of writing in every locality, the scald must have been among the pagan landowners what the parish priest and his written record were in the older christianized countries of Europe. * * * The scalds of the north disappeared at once when christian priests were established through the country. They were superseded in their utility by men of education, who knew the art of writing; and the country had no feudal barons to maintain such a class for amusement only. We hear little of the scalds after the first half of the 12th century." (Vol. i. p. 51.)

This is a most important admission; for it shews first, that the Northmen, as pagans, had, previous to the establishment of Christianity, nothing deserving of the name of literature; secondly, that with the spread of Christianity came the first attempts at taking the sagas out of the traditionary state, and fixing them in writing, (see vol. i. p. 24); and thirdly, that with the extending influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood, we can identify the decline of piracy, and the destruction of domestic slavery.

"The last piratical expeditions were about the end of the 12th century, and in the following century, *thraldom or slavery was*, it is understood, *abolished* by law, by Magnus the law improver." LAING's *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 112.

We shall add but one more observation upon the literary merits of the Anglo Saxons, as compared with the Northmen, and that observation is taken from a writer, remarkable for his anti-catholic prejudices.

"The pen has ever triumphed over the sword, the olive over the laurel, mental culture over barbarian violence; written language always prevails over unwritten, and even *the home of the Northmen is indebted for its alphabetic writing to the Anglo Saxons.*" LAPPENBURG's *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 15. (Translated by THORPE.)

CHAPTER III.

ALFRED.

KING ALFRED succeeds to the throne. The popularity enjoyed by him. The favourite child of his parents. Alfred induced by his mother to learn.. his desire for knowledge. Alfred afflicted with a constant infirmity. Alfred a visitor to holy places.. his prayer at the shrine of Saint Gueyr. Alfred's prayers for purity.. his devotion to the relics of saints. The Christians under Alfred defeated at Wilton Hill in the year 871. The Danes establish their winter quarters in London. The Mercians purchase peace from them. The king of the Mercians abandons England, and goes as a pilgrim to Rome. Ceolwulf succeeds Burhred as king of the Mercians.. holds the throne as a tributary of the Danes.. his oppressive conduct to the poor.. his exactions upon the monasteries compel the monks to disperse for the purpose of seeking subsistence. Miserable death of the oppressor Ceolwulf. The devastations of the Danes in Northumbria. Removal of the relics of St. Cuthbert. Naval battle in 875 between King Alfred and the Danes. Peace made between Alfred and the Northmen.. it is violated by the latter, who fix their head quarters at Exeter. Great naval victory of Alfred at Swanwich. The Danes establish themselves in various parts of England. Many Christians fly from

England. Alfred retreats with a few followers to Somersetshire. Alfred conceals himself at Athelney.. is rebuked by a neatherd's wife. The low state to which Alfred was reduced accounted for on religious grounds. Adventure of Alfred and the mendicant. The charity of the King.. its reward. The vision of St. Cuthbert. St. Cuthbert's prophecy. Defeat of the Danes at Kinwic, and capture of the magic standard of "the Raven." Alfred constructs a citadel at Athelney.. he visits the Danish camp disguised as a harper. Address of Alfred to his followers. Defeat of the Danes at Ethandun. Their King Guthrum consents to become a Christian. Baptism of Guthrum and his followers. Dumbert Bishop of Winchester. The holy hermit, Prince Edwold. Naval battle in 882, between Alfred and the Northmen. Vision of St. Cuthbert. Cuthred a slave placed on the throne of Northumbria. The privilege of "sanctuary" sanctioned by King Alfred. At his request the Pontiff frees "the school of the English" at Rome from every tribute. Gifts of the Pope to Alfred. Alfred's offerings to Rome and to the shrine of St. Thomas in India. The children of Alfred.. one of his daughters, the Princess Æthelgeou, a nun. Education promoted. The manner in which Alfred's children were instructed. Alfred, a promoter of the fine arts. His constant exercises and devotions including his daily attendance at mass, visits to churches, alms' deeds and reading of the Holy Scriptures. Alfred's assistants in the promotion of learning.. Werefrith, Bishop of Worcester; Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury; Athelstan and Werwulf, priests, Grimbald the Abbot, Priest John, and Bishop Asser. Alfred defeats the Danes at Rochester in the year 885.. naval battles the same year. London restored by Alfred. The sovereignty of Alfred acknowledged. University of Oxford instituted. The same year (887,) in which Alfred sends alms to Rome, he commences translations from the Latin into the Anglo-Saxon language. King Alfred founds two

monasteries. Distaste for the monastic life at this period accounted for. Slaves made free and educated as monks. The murder of the Abbot John. The King's daughter made Abbess of Shaftesbury. The glorious offerings made by Alfred to God.. the allocation of offices in his court.. his payments to artizans. The first portion of Alfred's offerings to God bestowed upon the poor.. the second to the monasteries of Athelney and Shaftesbury.. the third to education.. the fourth to monasteries at home and abroad. King Alfred as an administrator of justice.. his care for the poor. Alfred's admonition to judges. In the advancement of learning Alfred promotes the emancipation of slaves. Alfred's sister, the Queen and Nun Ethelswitha, dies at Pavia. Three Irish pilgrims received at the court of Alfred. The institutions of Alfred for the discovery of crimes and punishment of offenders. Invasion of Danes in the year 893. Arrival of the Pagan Hasting. Baptism of the sons of Hasting as Christians. Generous conduct of Alfred to the wife and children of Hasting when taken prisoners. Defeats inflicted on the Northmen in various parts of England. The English afflicted with a pestilence. Alfred's improvements in shipbuilding. Battle between the king's ships and the Northmen's. Death of King Alfred the truthteller. Alfred's laws as they affected the slave-class and the poor.

CHAPTER III.

ALFRED.

A.D. 871—901.

The same year (871) in which Ethered expired, and immediately after the death of that monarch, Alfred, who was the heir-apparent to the throne, by the permission of Heaven, and with the hearty approval of all the inhabitants of the kingdom, assumed the reins of government.* The dignity which he thus attained was one, which if he would have deigned to accept, he could long previously have enjoyed with universal approbation, and that too even during the life time of his brother, for he surpassed Ethered and the rest in wisdom, excelled them in virtue, and was ever distinguished by the ardour of his bravery,

* "Eodem anno Alfredus sæpe supra memoratus, qui usque ad id temporis viventibus fratribus suis, secundarius fuerat, totius regni gubernacula, divino concedente nutu, cum summa omnium illius regni accolarum voluntate, confestim fratre defuncto suscepit. Asser, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 7. *(Camden) Annal.* p. 164.

which had secured for him the victory in most of the battles in which he had been engaged.*

Alfred had been greatly loved beyond all his other brothers, both by his father and his mother—the mutual liking of both for him was a common feeling in which all other persons participated, and thus it happened that he was always brought up in the royal palace—never separated from his parents—but from infancy to boyhood always before them; each year appearing to increase in beauty, in comeliness, and in grace—to outshine his brothers in these qualities; and to appear their superior in looks, in language, and in behaviour.† From his cradle he exhibited a thirst for true knowledge, whilst good example and the innate impulse of a generous nature supplied the wants which learning and wisdom are alone capable of removing.‡ But alas! the improper inattention both of his parents and of his nurses permitted him to remain illiterate until he reached to the twelfth year of his age, even if he were not somewhat older. Up to that time however he had been, by night as well as by day, a diligent and a delighted listener to the recitation of Saxon poems, and that which he heard others state, he readily committed to memory. He was instructed at the same time in the arts of the chace—untiringly, and not in vain, sought to make himself an accomplished

---

* Asser, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 7. *Annal.* p. 164.

† Asser, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 5.

‡ This is a paraphrase of the original. "Cui ab incunabulis ante omnia, et cum omnibus præsentis vitæ studiis sapientiæ desiderium cum nobilate generis; nobilis mentis ingenium supplevit." Asser, p. 5.

master of the mysteries of venery. It is a science, like all others, that it has pleased God should be a gift to man, in which we have often seen him exhibit a wonderful knowledge, and an almost miraculous success.*

---

* "Nam incomparibilis omnibus peritia et felicitate in illa arte; sicut et in cæteris omnibus Dei donis fuit; sicut et nos sæpissime vidimus." ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 5.

The observation of this good bishop—the friend of Alfred—may be evidence against him, that he was attached to the chace at a time when Wales as well as England were infested with wolves, and the destruction of such animals was a work of humanity. His opinions may be contrasted with facts respecting other bishops, who repudiated the doctrines that he taught, and the faith he professed.

"*Archbishop Cranmer*," says Mr. Whitaker, in his History of the parish of Whalley, "was an excellent horseman and *fond of hunting*. One of his successors, *Archb. Juxon*, was probably the last prelate in England who kept a pack of hounds: but there was an Irish prelate of later times, T——bp. of R——, a little man, but mighty hunter, whose example in this respect as well as others, probably has been monitory to his brethren in that kingdom, and who closed a life of indecorum and irregularity, and in a manner more horrid than was ever openly told." WHITAKER'S *History of Whalley*, p. 171, *note* †.

Archbishop Cranmer was not merely as it is said "fond of hunting," but of *hawking* also, as there is extant a warrant by him, dated 3rd June, 1553, in which, as one of the lords of the council, he orders two men suspected of stealing hawks to be sent up to London, for the purpose of being *put to the torture*. The order in council is addressed to the Earl of Sussex, and it states:

"We have thought good to pray your lordship to cause the sayd man and Gardener to be sent hither unto us under oure custody, to the end we may give such ordre for *the examinacion by tortours* or otherwyse of the sayd persons——"

The first name signed to this horrid document is that of Thomas Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. See ELLIS'S *Original Letters illustrative of English History*, (Third Series), vol. iii. pp. 308, 309. Upon the impropriety of bishops and clergymen indulging in the pleasures of the chace, see SPELMAN'S *English Works*, pp. 112 to 118 *b*.

It so happened, that upon a certain day, his mother shewed to him and his brothers a book of Saxon poetry which she held in her hand, and said, "whichever of "you shall most quickly learn the contents of this book, "I will give it to him." Excited by these words, attracted by the splendid beauty of the initial letter of the book, and impelled by the Divine inspiration, he anticipated his elder brothers by saying, "will you really give "that book to the one amongst us, who shall the soonest "learn its contents, and recite them before you?" Smilingly and joyfully she assentingly said, "I will give it." He instantly took the book out of her hand, went to a master and read. As soon as he had read through the book, he brought it back to his mother, and repeated the contents for her.*

---

* ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 5. The statement that King Alfred did not learn how to read until he had passed his twelfth year has given rise to much controversy.

The statement rests upon the authority of Asser, and if he affirmed the fact as coming within his own positive knowledge we cannot see the possibility of disbelieving it. He does however no such thing. He gives it upon hearsay, and thus introduces it—"——scilicet *aliquantulum, quantum meæ cognitioni innotuit,* de infantilibus et puerilibus domini mei venerabilis Ælfredi Anglosaxonum regis moribus hoc in loco breviter inserendum esse existimo." *(Vit. Ælf.* p. 5.) The statement of Asser is confirmed by the belief of that diligent and conscientious historian William of Malmsbury, who uses the expression "jam duodenis omnis literaturæ expers fuit. *(Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 123). Still it is difficult to credit that Alfred was twelve years of age, before he learned to read. The entire context shews that the person who incited Alfred to a love of learning was "his own mother" "mater sua," to make use of the phrase employed by Asser. Mr. TURNER *(History of Anglo Saxons,* vol. i. p. 505,) declares that Alfred's taste for literature, his first incitement to read a book, were both "owing to his step-mother, Judith;" and adopt-

Ever after this, wherever he went, or in whatever course of proceedings he was engaged, he always carried about him, and wrapped up in his bosom for the purposes of devotion, a book containing the daily office, that is the celebration of the hours, some psalms, and a great many prayers. These all were contained in a single volume,

---

ing his assertion as an historical fact, he gives a glowing picture of the learning, accomplishments and domestic virtues of Judith, (see vol. i. pp. 505, 506,) which are utterly inconsistent with what the old historians state respecting her. (See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. pp. 73, 77, 83, 214, 268, 274, 391, 650). Upon this controverted point we quote the observations of the Rev. Dr. Lingard. They are marked with his accustomed shrewdness and impartiality.

"Asser is made to tell this story as if it had happened after Alfred was twelve years old. But that is impossible, for Alfred was not born before 849, and his father married Judith, his second wife, in 856. To escape from the difficulty, Mr. Turner supposes that by the word mother is to be understood his stepmother Judith; Mr. Wright, that Osburge did not die before Ethelwulf's second marriage, but had been divorced from him, and resumed her maternal charge after his death. But neither supposition can be admitted. Judith was but a mere girl, younger than the eldest of Ethelwulf's sons. Certainly she could not be the mother, intrusted with the care of those princes; and *of the divorce of Osburge, there is no proof or probability.* On the death of Ethelwulf, her eldest son was king; yet in the story, he is one of the boys dependent on her authority. If the tale is to be believed, *it can refer only to the natural mother of the princes at a time when Alfred was very young.*" LINGARD'S *History and Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church,* vol. ii. p. 239, note 1.

The reasoning of Dr. Lingard is strongly confirmed by the circumstance that Roger de Wendover, in copying the anecdote respecting Alfred and his mother, omits the statement, that it happened in his twelfth year, but merely mentions it, "in annis puerilibus" (vol. i. p. 319): whilst another author positively asserts that Alfred from his infancy knew how to read;—

"Hic ab ipsa pene infantia sua *legere* et discere dulce habuit." ETHELRED, ABB. RIEVAL, *Geneal. Reg. Ang.* p. 352.

which was his constant companion by day, and by night —a fact, of which we have been an eye witness.*

Alack! that which he did desire the most—literature and science—he could not, by his mere wishing, master, for as he was wont to say—there were not, at one period good scholars † in the entire kingdom of the West Saxons, —a loss and an inconvenience amongst all others inseparable from this life was that, which as it was the most heart-felt by him, so was it the cause of his most

---

* "Sicut ipsi vidimus." ASSER, p. 5.

† "Lectores boni." ASSER, p. 5, literally "good readers." A literal version would however inadequately convey the meaning of the author. At one time, we are told that those who aspired to the dignity of "lector" or "a reader"—"solis provectæ ætatis hominibus, *meritis et doctrina insignibus.*" (See Ducange in verb. "lector," "scholæ lectorum.") Florence of Worcester, ad an. 871, p. 587, copies this statement from Asser, but substitutes for the words "lectores boni" a phrase equally significant "grammatici." "*Grammaticus*" in the middle ages not meaning "a grammarian," but a man of profound knowledge—a scholar, if we may so term it, *par excellence;* not merely well versed in the holy scriptures, but in mathematics, astronomy, rhetoric, poetry, and in all secular sciences. *Frithem. Chron. Hirsang.*, ad an. 890. See GUADET, note on *Richer*, vol. ii. p. 63, note 1. The following quotations shew what signification is to be given to the words "boni lectores" of Asser, and "grammatici" of Florence.

"Et Dominus rex Carolus iterum a Roma *artis grammaticæ et computatoriæ* magistros secum adduxit in Franciam, et ubique *studium literarum* expandere jussit." These persons are subsequently termed "grammaticos *peritissimos*," and we are told that before their arrival in France, there had been "nullum studium *liberalium artium.*" *Einhard. Annal.* ad an. 786. PERTZ, *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*, vol. i. p. 171.

——"quoniam *Grammatica* et rhetorica ceteraque liberalium artium studia vana sunt, et valde nociva servis Dei, nisi per gratiam divinam bonis moribus subesse noscantur: quia *scientia* inflat, caritas vero ædificat." EGINHARD *Epist. Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vi. p. 376. See MAITLAND'S *Dark Ages*, pp. 17—29.

constant complaint, and most bitter regret; and for this very reason, that at that very time, to which he referred, viz. that when he had youth, opportunity and the capacity for learning, he had not instructors. But when he was afterwards advanced in life, and his days were constantly occupied, with the internal disorders, and exterior afflictions of his country, when the cares of royalty oppressed him, and the invasions made on him by the Pagans, both by sea and land distracted him, he complained that he was no longer able, aided as he was by a few trembling teachers and writers, to devote his thoughts to study. Still amid all his embarrassments, even from infancy to mature age, and from thence to the very close of his life, he was, we believe, actuated by an insatiable desire to improve his mind, and add to his store of knowledge.*

Upon the public solemnization of his marriage in Mercia †—a ceremony which was attended by an immense crowd of persons of both sexes, and when the public rejoicings had been prolonged for a considerable period of time, Alfred was seized in the presence of all the guests with a sudden and fearfully agonizing pain, the nature of

---

* "Sed tamen inter præsentis vitæ impedimenta ab infantia *usque ad præsentem diem*, et, ut credo, usque ad obitum vitæ suæ in eodem insaturabili desiderio, sicut nec ante destituit: ita nec etiam adhuc inhiare desinit." ASSER, p. 5.

In the translation in the text, there is a necessary change from these words in the original, which were written in the year 893, and when King Alfred was in his forty-fifth year. This life of Alfred by Asser, was written, as it is observed by Dr. Lingard, by "a Welshman, and for the use of Welshmen." See *History and Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 421.

† In the year 868.

which appeared to baffle the skill of every medical man there.*

The precise character of this affliction was indeed not only unknown to those who were present but to all others, who had a subsequent opportunity for examining into it, for (it is lamentable to state!) the same infirmity continued not only from his twentieth to his fortieth year, but clung to him ever afterwards. How, it may be asked, did he come to be visited by such an affliction? Many fancied it was ascribable to fascination or enchantment on the part of the populace; others attributed it to be the work of demoniac envy, which pains the good with some persecution; others considered it to be a species of extraordinary fever; others regarded it as the fistula, a most afflicting and torturing disease, under which he had been suffering from his infancy; but from which he had been relieved, ever since he had, upon a certain occasion, when travelling through Cornwall, on a hunting expedition, turned out of his road (and as it would appear in accordance with the inspiration of Heaven) to go and pray in a church in which rest the relics of Saint Gueyr and where the remains of St. Neot have since been deposited.†

---

* Asser, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 12.

† "Adjoining to Leskerd was formerly the church of St. Guerir, which name signifies in British a physician, where Asser writes, King Alfred prostrating himself in prayer, recovered his health. Neotus, a person of distinguished sanctity and learning, being afterwards buried in the same church, so outshone the former Saint, that the place obtained the name of Neotstow, or St. Neot's Place, now St. Neoths; and the religious serving God there were called Clerks of St. Neot, and endowed with good revenues, as appears from Domesday." Camden's *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 5. (Gough's ed.) See Alford *Annal. Eccles. Angl.* vol. i. p. 123, § 29. Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. x. p. 756.

Alfred had ever been a sedulous visitor of holy places, even from his childhood—always devout in prayer, and unceasingly bountiful in almsgiving. So, on the occasion referred to, he lay a long time prostrated in silent prayer, beseeching the mercy of the Lord, entreating that the Almighty God in His boundless clemency would be pleased to send him in place of the pangs of his then most afflicting infirmity some sort of minor disease; some one which should not however so manifest itself by an exterior mark on the body, as to render him incapable of action, or liable to the contempt of others; for he feared more than any wracking pain, such infirmities as blindness or leprosy, that might make him either incapable of serving his fellow men, or render him odious in their sight.

As soon as he had finished his prayer, he proceeded on his journey, but a very short time afterwards he felt, that that which he had asked for in prayer had been granted to him, and that through the Divine goodness, he was completely cured of the malady under which he had been suffering.

Thus was this dire affliction taken from him in the first flower of his youth, through his devout prayers, and his constant pious supplications to the Almighty. Still, we may mention, however briefly and cursorily, and even though it be not in strict chronological order, that we do so, another fact—and we may observe that we cite it as a proof of his tender devotion to God. The fact is this. When Alfred was still an exceedingly young man, and previous to his being married, he wished that he should be able to keep his mind constantly and steadily fixed upon the commandments of God; that he might be able to preserve body as well as soul in a state of perfect purity—

for all his fear was to offend God—to do any thing contrary to the Divine will. To attain both these objects he very often rose, unknown to every person, from his bed at the dead hour of night, or the earliest dawn of day, for the purpose of *visiting and praying in the churches*, and *close to the relics of Saints*,* and there did he long and

* "Sæpissime galli cantu, et matutinis horis clam consurgens, ecclesias et reliquias sanctorum orandi causa visitabat." ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 12. The motive which influenced the great King Alfred in visiting the relics of saints, was that which is thus expressed by St. Chrysostom, in his 40th Homily, in reference to the relics of Saints Juventus and Maximus, martyred by the apostate Julian.

"Idcirco sæpe eos invisamus, capsulam attingamus, magnaque fide reliquias, eorum complectamur, *ut inde benedictionem aliquam assequamur.*" *Act. Sanct.* (Januar.,) vol. ii. p. 621. *S. S. Juventin. et Maximin.*, c. iii. § 11.

The ancient Catholic doctrine and practice on this point will be found fully explained in the following extract from a most valuable work:—

"The relics of the saints were collected by the Christians, and preserved and honored by them with devout respect. The community of Smyrna, in their epistle to the Christians of Philadelphia, say that they had collected together the relics of the blessed martyr Polycarp; that they esteemed them more than gold and precious stones; and that they preserved them, that they might assemble yearly together in the place where these treasures were deposited, to commemorate the death of their holy bishop. To justify the respect which was shown to relics, the fathers appealed to the Scripture; in which they found the example of the dead man, who was restored to life by contact with the bones of the prophet Eliseus; of the sick who were healed; and of the devils that had been cast out by the handkerchiefs and girdles which had touched the body of Saint Paul. They believed that a power of blessing resided within the relics, which they imparted by touch to other things, to the vessels and linens in which they were preserved. In the writings of these early times are related many miraculous cures which were effected by relics. St. Augustin relates that he had been an eye-witness to many which were wrought at the discovery of the bodies of St. Gervasius and Protasius, by St. Ambrose at Milan, and to others which were

humbly supplicate, that the great and omnipotent Deity would, in His mercy, release his mind from the slavery and temptations of sin by subjecting his body to some infirmity, which while it did not incapacitate him from the performance of his duties in this world, might tend to strengthen and confirm him in virtue. Such was the grace that he, with a devout spirit, had frequently prayed for, and hence that same infirmity, we have before alluded to, was bestowed upon him, by God's goodness, and under which he suffered for many years so long and so severely, until at last it was through his prayers completely taken away from him. But, then, sad to say, although it was removed, another and a worse infirmity attacked him, as we have already mentioned at his nuptials, and from his twentieth to his forty-fifth year incessantly afflicted him. And if at any time the mercy of God permitted a cessation to its agony for a day, a night, or even a single hour, still the fear and the horror of the inexpressible agony it caused never left his mind, so that it made him, as it seemed to himself, nearly incapable of giving his whole thoughts either to the worship of God, or the service of man.*

---

effected by the relics of St. Stephen in Africa. Gaudentius, bishop of Brescia, undertook a journey into Cappadocia to obtain relics for his diocese; and it frequently happened that whole cities contended for the possession of the bodies of saints. St. Gregory the Great remarks that to those who sought for relics from Rome, clothes which had been sanctified by being applied to the relics or tombs of the apostles were sent." DÖLLINGER'S *History of the Church*, vol. ii. pp. 366, 377, (translated by the Rev. Edward Cox, D.D.)

* ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 12, 13. Asser again alludes to this

Alfred might be said to have accepted almost unwillingly of the crown, for he felt that unless aided by Divine assistance, he never could, isolated as he was, withstand the cruel and overwhelming strength of the Pagans, when such fearful losses had been suffered during the life time of his brothers.* Such were his feelings, and yet a month had only passed over him as a king, when he had to encounter the entire army of the Pagans, at Wilton hill, which is on the south bank of the river Guilou (the Willy,) and from which the entire district is named.† His soldiers were few, and there was an awful disparity between their numbers and those of the enemy. Notwithstanding this disadvantage the fight was maintained with wondrous courage on both sides, for the greater part of the day, until at last the Pagans seeing they could make no impression upon the ranks of their opponents, and being fearful of their own destruction, fled from the field. Unfortunately, the Christians gave loose to their ardour in pursuit, and thus afforded to the Danes an opportunity for turning upon them; and at the very moment, that they fancied they were about to gain the victory, destruction

---

infirmity of Alfred, "Nam a 20 ætatis anno usque ad 45, *quem nunc agit*, gravissima incogniti doloris infestatione incessanter fatigatus, ita, ut ne unius quidem horæ securitatem habeat, qua aut illam infirmitatem non sustineat, aut sub illius formidine lugubriter prope constitutus non desperet." *Vit.*, p. 17.

* "Cumque regnare prope quasi invitus, &c." ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 7.

† See CAMDEN's *Britannia*, vol. i. pp. 131, 132, 150. In p. 151, it is stated, "The Earl of Pembroke's magnificent house here (Wilton) was begun *on the site of the nunnery* in the reign of Elizabeth, by Sir Wm. Herbert, after his advancement to that title by Edward VI., 1551."

and defeat overwhelmed them. Nor must we see any thing stupendous in this circumstance, considering how small was the army, and how scanty the number of Christian soldiers engaged in this combat ; for in this self same year, the greatest portion of the West Saxon population had been exterminated in eight pitched battles ;* whilst the number of Pagans slain in the same eight battles can be known but to God alone.†

---

* ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 7, 8.

† F. WIGORN, p. 588. ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 8. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 323. "Dani illum noviter in regem erectum prosequentes ipsum ad *Walton* in *Sussex* invenerunt, ubi rex Aluredus cum eis præliando campum deseruit, et usque ad Silvam fugit." BROMTON, *Chron.*, p. 809.

Mr. Coxe, the learned editor of Roger de Wendover observes, upon the battle of Wilton, as described by his author, that "the text follows Asser, with whom agree the Saxon Chronicle and others, except Bromton, who calls the name of this place Walton in Sussex," (vol. i. p. 323, note 1. *Wiltun*). We doubt if the veracity of Bromton is justly impeached by these observations of Mr. Coxe. Mr. Coxe supposes that one battle only was fought in the reign of Alfred, in 871, and that therefore Bromton is in error by substituting the name of Walton for Wilton. We think, on the other hand, there is the proof of *three* battles—the first that of Wilton, fought a month after the accession of Alfred; the second at Walton, as stated in Bromton, when that monarch saved the remains of his army, by retreating into a wood, "usque ad silvam fugit"—a circumstance not referred to by Asser, nor the Saxon Chronicle, and the third at Reading, as stated by Ethelwerd, in which the soldiers of Alfred fought against the Northmen, but in the absence of Alfred, as he was attending at the time the funeral of his brother—"exiguus Anglorum exercitus propter absentiam regis, qui eodem tempore exiquias fratris impleverat." The time of this battle is fixed by the designation applied to the army of the Danes "*æstivus* exercitus"—the exact year, by the circumstance—"Denique in eodem anno Angli occidentales pacem struunt cum illis." ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 3, p. 844. Lappenberg considers there was but one battle fought in this year subsequent to the accession of Alfred. See *Anglo-Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 45, 46. (Thorpe's ed.)

In the same year (871) the West Saxons made peace with the Pagans; and the condition of the peace was, that the Pagans should withdraw from their territory: a condition which was then carried into effect.*

The same army of Pagans passed from the West Saxon kingdom into Mercia, and in the year 872 established their winter quarters in London,† when the Mercian king entered into terms with them, and purchased with gold peace from his invaders.‡

In the year 872 the people of Northumbria expelled from their territory their king Egbert, and Archbishop Wulfer. Both betook themselves to the Court of Burhred, the Mercian king, by whom they were received with due respect and befitting honour.§

In the year 873, the army of the Northmen marched against the Northumbrians, and finally fixed their winter quarters at Torksey in Lincolnshire. Peace was again made with them by the Mercians.‖ The same year Egbert, the expulsed king of Northumbria expired, and was immediately succeeded by Riccius, who reigned for three years.¶

---

* Asser, *Vit.*, p. 8. F. Wigorn, p. 588.

† F. Wigorn, p. 589. Asser, *Vit.* p. 8. The Saxon Chronicle adds :—"This year went the army of the Danes to London from Reading, and there chose their winter quarters." See H. Hunt., lib. v. p. 349.

‡ Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 323. See *Sax. Chron.*, 872. Asser, *Vit.*, p. 8.

§ Rog. de Wend., vol. i. pp. 323, 324.

‖ *Sax. Chron.*, 873. Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. 3, p. 844. Asser, *Vit.*, p. 8. Roger de Wendover states that they purchased peace from the Danes.

¶ Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 325. "Ricsig factus est rex,"

The same year in which these events occurred, Wulfer was restored to the archiepiscopal see of York.*

In the year 874 the army of Northmen marched from Lincolnshire to Repton† under the command of Halfden.‡ They established their winter quarters in Repton, and destroyed there a monastery, which had justly been most celebrated, as it had constantly been regarded as the truly sacred mausoleum of the Mercian kings.§ Halfden then summoned to his aid three other of the Northmen kings, Godrun, Oskitul, and Amund, and all combined together drove from his throne and dominions the Mercian king Burhred.‖

Burhred had now reigned for two and twenty years—he beheld the entire land of England, even to its remotest corner, wasted by rapine, or stained with blood shed by the barbarians, and then, either despairing of victory, or finding himself in an inextricable maze of difficulties, he abandoned his kingdom, proceeded on a pilgrimage to Rome, in which city he died in a few days after entering its walls. His body was interred in the school of the

---

Chron. Mailros, 873, p. 144. Northumbrani regem suum Ecgbertum, et Archiepiscopum Vulfhere de provincia expellent, et quendam vocabulo Ricsig in regnum sibi constituunt." S. Dunelm., *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 6, p. 14. See also *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, p. 145.

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 325.

† *Saxon Chronicle*, 874.

‡ "Aldene cum exercitu suo movens de Lindissi in Repedun hyemavit." *Chron. Mailros*, p. 144, ad ann. 874.

§ Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 26. See S. Dunelm, *Hist. Eccles.*, p. 14.

‖ *Chron. Mailros*, p. 144.

English,* within the precincts of the church of St. Mary.†

The successor to the Mercian throne was a delegate of the Danes—a person named Ceolwulf, one of the ministers of the late monarch, — a man, who was by birth an Englishman; but by his utter disregard of religion a foreigner.‡ This man swore an oath of fealty to the Danes, promising that whatever tribute they should require from him he would faithfully pay, and that whensoever they should demand back from him the kingdom which they had entrusted to him, he would, whatever might be his reluctance to do so, upon the penalty of his life, resign it.§

---

* Ingulphus, *Hist.*, pp. 26, 27.

† *Sax. Chron.* 874. H. Hunt., lib. v. p. 349, "et in Ecclesia Sanctæ Mariæ in Schola Saxonum honorifice sepelitur." Rog. de Hoveden, *Ann.*, p. 417. Mr. Turner states that this king "went disgracefully to Rome." *Hist. of Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 539. We think he was justly punished by Heaven, in losing his crown, when he had used his powers as a king in the spoliation of the church. See p. 149, of this volume. We cannot however see any disgrace in his seeking at Rome as a penitent, for absolution of that and other sins. An ancient writer—the relation of king Alfred—did not manifestly entertain the same feeling towards the unfortunate Burhred, as Mr. Turner, or he would not thus have referred to the last events of his life and his death.

"Rex prædictus non spe abjecta Christi itinera legit desiderando Romam, migraturque ibi suumque corpus mausoleo digno conditum jacet in templo Christi genetricis sanctæ, quæ nunc Anglorum scholæ visitant nomen." Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. 3, p. 844.

‡ "Anglicus genere, sed Barbarus impietate." Ingulphus, p. 27.

§ This transaction is thus described in the *Saxon Chronicle*.

"And the same year" (874) "they" (the Danes) "gave Ceolwulf, an unwise king's thane, the Mercian kingdom to hold, and he swore oath to them, and gave hostages, that it should be ready for them whatever day they would have it, and he should be

Ceolwulf traversed the entire land that had been entrusted to him, and the few miserable agriculturalists that were still left in it, he despoiled of all they possessed, whilst he absorbed by his exactions not only the profits, but the property of traders; the widow, as well as the orphan were oppressed by him; and as to the religious, all as if they were holders of unknown treasures, were afflicted by him with unnumbered torments. Amongst his many crimes is to be reckoned the conduct which he pursued towards the venerable Godric, the abbot of Croyland, and his unfortunate brother monks: he required from them a contribution of one thousand pounds, and by his enforcement of such a sum he nearly annihilated the monastery. Its extreme poverty deterred from approaching it, those who might otherwise have sought their conversion within its precincts; for it was rendered so incapable of sustaining even the monks, who had taken their vows, that the abbot Godric was obliged to send many of them out amongst their relations, or the friends of the monastery, and thus to scatter them all about the country, for the mere purpose of procuring subsistence; and doing this, the abbot and a few monks remained in the monastery, where existence was eked out by them in the very lowest state of penury. Then all the chalices of the monastery except three, and all its silver plate with the exception of the cross-bowl of king Wiglaf,* and its other exceedingly precious ornaments were either con-

ready, with himself, and with all those that would remain with him, at the service of *the army*," i.e., *the Danes*. INGRAM'S Translation of *Saxon Chronicle*. See ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 8.

* See vol. i. p. 745 of this work. INGULPHUS, *Hist.*, p. 9.

verted into money, or sold for money, to satisfy the demands of the miserably avaricious delegate—king Ceolwulf.

Of this Ceolwulf it may here be stated that he was subsequently deposed by his masters, the Danes—that by them (most just in so acting) he was not only despoiled of his royal dignity, but mutilated as if he were the meanest and vilest of wretches, and so, fittingly, by a miserable death terminated a miserable life.

Afterwards, when king Alfred obtained a superiority over the Danes, he incorporated the Mercian kingdom with his own. Thus fell a throne, which from its first occupant, Penda, to the reign of the wretched delegate Ceolwulf, had been established for about two hundred and twenty years.*

In the year 875 the army of the Danes, which had been encamped at Repton, divided itself into two bodies, one of which, led by Halfden, proceeded to Northumbria, established its winter quarters on the banks of the river Tyne, and rendered the entire province of the Northumbrians subject to the sway of the Danes. The second body of Northmen, commanded by the three Pagan kings,

---

* INGULPHUS, *Hist.*, pp. 26, 27. W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. i. § 96. Ethelwerd states that Ceolwulf was not left in full possession of Mercia longer than a year—that it was divided into two parts, one of which was given to Halfden. *Hist.*, lib. iv. p. 844.

To this settlement of the Danes may be ascribed the establishment of "the Danish burghs," Lincoln, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Stamford"—to which York and Chester were afterwards added. See PALGRAVE'S *Rise and. Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. ii. pp. cclxxxiii, ccxcv. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 47, 48.

Godrun, Oskitul, and Amund, advanced to Cambridge, which they made their winter quarters.*

The southern bank of the Tyne, which hitherto had enjoyed peace, was now to be wasted by Halfden the king of the Danes, who brought with him in an immense fleet the army that had destroyed the monastery of Repton,†

---

* Asser, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 8. *Sax. Chron.* 875.

† S. Dunelm, *Hist. Eccles.* p. 14. The *Saxon Chronicle* states that the Danes who "fixed their winter quarters by the river Tyne then subdued that land, and frequently invaded the Picts, and the Strathclydwallians," (A.D. 875.,) designated by Asser the "Stratudenses," and called by Mr. Turner (vol. i. p. 540) "the Strathcluyd Britons." Mr. Turner adds, "Scotland attempted to withstand them" (the Danes) "but failed, and the king of Wales fled to Ireland for refuge from their attacks." This latter fact is stated on the authority of "the Annals of Ulster," and from the same source we learn, that in 876, Halfden was killed in battle by the Irish. See Turner's *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 540, notes 13 and 14.

This differs from the account given by Simeon of Durham who declares that Halfden was afflicted with madness, attacked with so loathsome a disease as to be unendurable to his army, to have been then driven by them from the Tyne with three vessels, and to have perished shortly afterwards with all his followers. See *Hist. Eccles.* c. 13, p. 21.

Lappenberg observes, that "Cumberland appears to have particularly suffered in these invasions, Carlisle and other towns having been entirely destroyed, and only rebuilt about two centuries later by the Normans." *England under the Anglo Saxon kings*, vol. ii. p. 49. See Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 326. S. Dunelm., *Hist. Reg.*, 875, 876, 1092, pp. 145, 217. H. Hunt. p. 349. Alford, *Annal. Ang. Eccles.*, vol. iii. p. 132, § 3.

As to the monastery of Repton, it is worthy of a brief notice, as having attracted the attention of Protestant writers.

"Fuller, in his Church History, on the authority of his kinsman Samuel Roper of Lincoln's Inn, says that one Thacker, being possessed of Repingdon (Repton) Abbey in Derbyshire, alarmed with the news that queen Mary had set up the abbeys again, (and fearing how large a reach such a precedent might have,) *upon a Sunday* (belike the better day, the better deed,) called together the

As soon as bishop Eardulf heard of their arrival, he foresaw the coming destruction of the church of Lindisfarne, and the ultimate depopulation of his bishopric. He considered with his friends both upon the propriety and necessity of flight; but that for which he was most solicitous was how, or in what fitting manner he should dispose of the most sacred body of Saint Cuthbert, for that, indeed, was a treasure from which he never would willingly separate, whether it was his destiny to remain in his church, or to depart from it. His associate in carrying into effect this determination, was a priest of approved sanctity Eadred the abbot of the monastery of Luel, which had long before this time been founded by St. Cuthbert.

These two in considering what was the course most proper for them to pursue, called to mind what had been the last words of St. Cuthbert, when about for ever to quit this mortal life, viz., that it was better to abandon one's country than to live in it, a slave to foreigners, "for," said the saint with a paternal solicitude for those, who consulted him, "if necessity should ever compel you to "choose between two unavoidable evils, I would by far "prefer, that you removed my remains from the tomb, in

---

carpenters and masons of the country, and *plucked down in one day* (church work is a cripple going up, but rides post in coming down) *a most beautiful church* belonging thereunto, saying he would destroy the nest, for fear the birds should build therein again!"

"Sir Henry Spelman, in his History of Sacrilege, notices Mr. Godfrey Thacker, of Repingdon, as an instance of a person possessing church tithes and lands, and making a very insufficient allowance to the minister of his church, and remarks his having been reduced in his circumstances without any assignable cause."

ELLIS's *Original Letters illustrative of English History*, (Third Series), vol. iii. p. 88. See DUGDALE's *Monasticon*, vol. vi. p. 429, and vol. i. pp. 552, 615, 747, of this work.

"which they are about to repose, and that you carried "them with you to whatsoever place God should assign "you a habitation, than that you would, under any pre- "tence or condition, submit your necks to the yoke of "schismatics."

The bishop and the abbot as they reflected upon these words, believed that their father Cuthbert had given utterance to them in a spirit of prophecy, and that the expressions which he had then used were now to be regarded as commands. They therefore took up the sacred and uncorrupted body of the pious father, and with it, in the same coffin,* (as they are described in ancient manuscripts) the sacred relics of the saints, namely, the head of him, who was beloved of heaven, the king and martyr Oswald, formerly buried in the cemetery of the church; a part also of the bones of St. Aidan (for, as it has been already stated, a portion of these had been taken with him by Colman when returning to Scotland†), and with

* "Tollentes ergo sacrum illud et incorruptum patris corpus, et una cum eo in ejusdem thecæ loculo." S. DUNELM, *Hist. Eccles.* p. 15. The coffin of St. Cuthbert was opened in the year 1104, and what was then seen has been described by an eye witness. In the account of his statement, the following passages will be found:

"A cerecloth of the finest linen adhered so closely to the face, that no part of it could be loosened; but between the neck and the shoulders the skin was exposed to the sight and touch. The arms could be moved with ease: the hands were joined over the lower part of the chest, and the fingers which were still flexible pointed upwards. * * * In addition, the coffin contained in a separate mass a collection of bones, the mortal remains of other bishops, which, to facilitate the conveyance, the monks had deposited in the same chest, when they were compelled to leave their ancient monastery." —LINGARD'S *History and Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 77, see also pp. 74 to 81. ROG. DE HOVEDEN, p. 470.

† See vol. i. pp. 358, 359, of this work.

these the bones, worthy of the veneration of the venerable priests and successors of father Cuthbert—that is, of Eadbert, Eadfrid, and Ethelwold.*

Taking with him these sacred relics the bishop fled from Lindisfarne, and abandoned his diocese. His flight was instantly followed by the cruel desolation of the monastery, and of the entire province of Northumbria. Halfden and his army gave up monasteries and churches to the flames; consigned the monks and nuns to death, and worse than death, and, in a word, their progress through the land was a prolonged slaughter and a continuous conflagration from the east to the west. Thus did it happen that the bishop and those who accompanied the body of the holy father could find no place of rest; for hurrying backwards and forwards, from place to place, they vainly sought in each refuge from the persecuting pursuit of pitiless barbarians.†

Whilst for many years, Pagans traversed the land of the Northumbrians, or set themselves down in it, as inhabitants, its christian population were to be found with their wives and children following the sacred body of the blessed confessor. They who had lost their country, home and household property, now confided solely in that body, believing that they should still be safe, provided they were worthy to retain it amongst them. They fled to all parts of Northumbria, conscious that none was for them a place of perfect safety—they fled, as sheep fly from ravening wolves, and whose sole confidence is reposed in the guidance and guardianship of their shepherd. But as they

* S. Dunelm, *Hist. Eccles.*, pp. 14, 15.

† Ibid., pp. 15, 16.

fled, such was the high degree of reverence entertained for the sanctity of Cuthbert, that neither the coffin in which his remains were placed, nor the bier on which they were carried, were permitted to be touched by any, but seven persons who had been specially appointed to take care of them—and these seven solely were allowed in case of necessity to place their hands upon them.*

For nine years did Eardulf the bishop, and Eadred the abbot of Lindisfarne fly from before the barbarians, and carry with them wherever they went their sole treasure—the body of St. Cuthbert.†

——

* S. Dunelm. *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 10, pp. 17, 18. These seven persons we are told never abandoned, during their lives, the care of the remains of St. Cuthbert. Their fidelity conferred amongst the ancient Catholics of Northumbria a lustre on their relatives—"de quorum stirpe multi in Northanimbrorum provincia tam clerici quam laici se descendisse tanto magis gloriantur, quanto progenitores sui sancto Cuthberto fidelius deservisse narrantur."—S. Dunelm. *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 12. pp. 19, 20.

† S. Dunelm. *Hist. Reg.*, ad an. 875, p. 127. We have omitted many interesting particulars respecting the true Catholic devotion exhibited in the ninth century to the relics of St. Cuthbert. (*Hist. Eccl.* Dunelm, lib. ii. c. 11, p. 19.) With these relics there was carried a copy of the Gospels, written, it is believed, by Eadfrid bishop of Lindisfarne, in honor of St. Cuthbert, adorned with gold and gems by his successor Ethelwold, and beautified and completed by St. Bilfrid Anchorite. This copy of the Gospels, described by Simeon of Durham to have been recovered by a miracle from the sea, into which it had fallen, is supposed by Mr. Twyford, the editor of the "Decem Scriptores" to be still preserved; "jam vero monere heic visum est codicem hunc ipsum, tam vetustum tantique semper ibi pretii habitum, proculdubio etiamnum inter bibliothecæ Cottonianæ cimelia." (MS. fol. 18. 1.) "Esse visendum," Præfatio, p. xxv. For a description of it, see same preface, pp. xxv, xxvi. Simeon of Durham thus depicts it,

In the summer of this year (875) king Alfred went out to sea with an armed fleet, and encountered in battle seven of the ships of the rovers. One of these was captured, and the remainder dispersed by him.*

" Ipsum sanctum Evangeliorum codicem reperiunt, qui ita forinsecus gemmis et auro sui decorem, ita intrinsecus literis et foliis priorem præferebat pulchritudinem, ac si aqua minime tactus fuisset." *Hist. Eccles.* DUNELM, lib. ii. c. 12. p. 20. As to translation of St. Cuthbert's remains, see Episc. Dunelm. in *Ang. Sac.*, vol. i. p. 699. W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. iii. pp. 275, 276. ROG. DE HOVEDEN, p. 417. ALFORD, *Ann. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. p. 133. § 4. In all these circumstances we find the deepest veneration for the Gospels combined with a due regard for the relics of those, whose holiness and sanctity had been made manifest upon earth. Such was Catholicity in England in 875; and about the same time in France, we find another proof of the firm belief in the Catholic doctrine of purgatory.

" Diebus autem Quadragesimæ, cum negotiis secularium rerum dispositis, orationi vacaret, vidit quadam nocte in somnis genitorem suum Hludowicum Imperatorem in angustiis constitutum, qui eum hoc modo Latino affatus est sermone: 'Adjuro te per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum ut me eripias ab his tormentis in quibus detineor, ut tandem aliquando vitam possim habere æternam.' Hac ergo visione perterritus, Epistolas per cuncta regni sui Monasteria destinavit obnixe postulans ut animæ in tormentis positæ suis apud Dominum *precibus interverirent.*" *Annal. Fuldens*, ad. an. 874.

" Ludowicus Rex in Quadragesima visione monitus, multas pro liberatione animæ patris sui Ludowici Imperatoris *eleemosynas et orationes* patravit." *Herman. Contract. Chron.*, ad an. 874, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. pp. 179, 236. See also *Chron. Sigebert Gemblac.*, p. 252. PERTZ, *Monument. German. Histor.*, vol. i. p. 387. See as to the vision of Charles le Gros in the year 885, upon purgatory, W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 111.

* *Saxon Chron.*, 875, ASSER, *Vit.* p. 8. F. WIGORN. p. 589. H. HUNT. p. 849. Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. 3., designates the vessels of the Northmen "dromones," and concludes by saying, "capitur unus dromon a rege," p. 844. See LAING'S *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway, Preliminary Dissertation*, c. iv. vol. i. pp. 130, 140.

In the year 876 the accursed army of the Pagans, abandoning Cambridge by night, advanced to Wareham fort, of which they took possession. There was there a monastery for nuns, which from its natural situation, being placed between the two rivers, the Frome and the Trent, constituted it a most formidable position. It is not accessible on any but the western side, where it is connected with the land. As soon as King Alfred heard of the advance of the Northmen, he prepared to give them battle, but the Pagans, fearful of the result of an encounter, preferred by the offer of yielding hostages to him, to obtain for themselves a truce.* The conditions of peace to which Alfred assented were, that they should instantly leave his country; that the invaders should without hesitation or dispute, give him such hostages as he should select;† and that they should moreover make oath, they should quit his kingdom, not only upon all those relics, in which, after God, he placed the most confidence.‡ but also, that

---

* Rog. de Wend. vol. i. pp. 326, 327.

† Ethelwerd states that Alfred gave the Northmen money on this occasion, "simulque pecuniam dando," lib. iv. c. 3. p. 844.

‡ "Nec non et sacramentum *in omnibus reliquiis quibus* ille rex maxime post Dominum *confidebat.*" Asser, *Vit. Ælf.* p. 8. The veneration of the great King Alfred for the relics of saints provokes *the contempt* of the philosophic Herr Lappenberg! who thus refers to the pious and Catholic faith of the English monarch:—

"We ought not perhaps to smile at Ælfred's credulity on this occasion, but rather infer that *the bones of the dead* were held in *similar veneration* among the Northern people." *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 49, note 4. (Thorpe.)

Those who believe in the gospel, before they join in the sneer of Herr Lappenberg would do well to look to 2 Kings, xiii. 21, Matthew, ix. 20, 21, Acts, v. 15, xix. 12.

they should swear on their bracelet,* upon which they never before would swear for any other person or people.†

The Northmen who were ever desirous of perpetrating some act of perfidy, violated their oaths, broke the peace, furtively stole from their encampment during the night, destroyed by an unexpected attack all the king's horses, and then hurried to the city of Exeter. Alfred collected an army, followed them with all speed, but when he found that they had already gained possession of the city he

---

"Now also, *in our times*," observed Ælfric in the eleventh century, "everywhere where holy men rest, God worketh many miracles at their dead bones, because He will with these miracles confirm the people's faith." THORPE'S *translation of Ælfric's Homilies*, vol. i. p. 293. See LINGARD'S *History and Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 101.

* "And they gave him as those who were worthiest of the army, and swore with oaths on *the holy bracelet*, which they would not before to any nation, that they would readily go out of his kingdom." *Saxon Chronicle*, 876. "Jusjuramentum in eorum *armilla sacra*." ETHELWERD, p. 844. "Their bracelets were highly valued by them and always buried with them. See *Bartholin*, 499 to 503. Johannes Tinmouth says they were nobilitatis indicium. *Hist. MSS.* cited by Dugdale i. p. 256; and see *Aimon*, pp. 371, 385." TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 541, note 16. "The ceremony here noticed may be illustrated by the following passage from Arngrim Jonas, *Rer. Island.* i. 7. 'In ara præterea annulus asservabatur argenteus, vel ex orichalcho, unciarum XX., quem forensi aliquo munere fungentes, jusjurandum jam præstituri, victimarum illinitum cruore, religiose inter jurandum contrectabant.' See also *Bartholinus de Armillis*, p. 101. Petrie in C. H. p. 355, note." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 49, *note by the translator*, Mr. THORPE. In the temple of Thor, there were the "armillæ auræ hastis appensæ." TORFÆUS, lib. 5, c. 7, vol. i. p. 203, see pp. 197, 203, 228, 232, 403. See *Annal. Fuldens*, ad an. 873. PERTZ, *Monument. German. Hist.* vol. i. p. 386, where "Arma" is manifestly mistaken for "Armilla."

† ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 8.

permitted them unmolested to fix there their winter quarters.*

The autumnal season of the year 877 had arrived, and still great numbers of the Pagan army were to be found holding possession of Exeter, whilst another portion of their forces had proceeded to Mercia to waste and spoil the country.† Day by day the numbers of this perverse generation increased in the land; so that if thirty thou-

---

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 327. This agrees with the statement in Asser, *Vit.* p. 8. The *Saxon Chronicle* mentions "under colour of this (truce) their cavalry stole by night into Exeter," A.D. 876. See also 877. The same authority fixes this *as the year* in which the Danes took possession of Northumbria as a place, which they were thenceforth determined to inhabit and cultivate. "The same year," says the *Sax. Chronicle*, "Healfden divided the land of the Northumbrians so that they '(the Danes)' became harrowers and ploughers." "Et suis divisit et illam cum suo exercitu coluit." Asser, *Vit.* p. 9. Most of these ancient annalists also notice that it was "this year Rollo reached Normandy with his army." See *Sax. Chron.* 876. Asser, *Vit.* p. 9. *Annal.* p. 156. Wallingford, p. 535. Fordun, lib. iv. c. 17 p. 669. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 144. H. Hunt., p. 360. W. Gemit. *Duc. Norman*, lib. ii. c. 4, 5, pp. 611, 612. (Camden) *Chron. Brit.* 876. *Chron. Virdunens.* *Chron. Sigebert, Gemblac. Var. Chron.*, in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. vii. pp. 222, 248, 252, 276, *(e)*. In *Konung Harald Harfager's Saga*, c. 24, we are told of this Rollo, and his connexion with England:—"Rollo piratica insignis erat, statura adeo procerus, ut ipsi portando equus minime par esset, qua propter pedes incedere coactus est, indeque Rolfo vulgo pedes *(Gaungu Rolfur)* dictus est, * * * Filios habuit Rolfo vulgo pedes, Vilhelmum, qui deinceps Richardum progenuit, ex quo natus Richardus secundus, cujus filius Rolfo Lange Spade genuit Vilhelmum Bastardum Angliæ postea regem." Snorro vol. i. pp. 99, 100. See Laing's *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. pp. 292, 293.

† Asser, *Vit.* p. 9.

sand of them were put to death between sun-rise and sun-set, the places left vacant by the dead were sure to be occupied by a double number of the living before the dawning light of the next morning.

Alfred then directed that there should be constructed in all parts of his kingdom boats and gallies, that is long ships, in order, that as the foes approached the coast they might be encountered, by English vessels, at sea. He confided to his brave sailors* the guardianship of the narrow seas, whilst he himself hastened to Exeter, in which the Pagans had wintered, for the purpose of besieging them, and in order to ensure his success in this undertaking, he had directed that his fleet should be on the watch to prevent any relief being sent to the enemy. The fleet of the king met at sea one hundred and twenty ships laden with the armed soldiers of the Danes, who were proceeding to the assistance of their fellow countrymen. As soon as the king's men perceived that these vessels were stowed with Pagan warriors, they instantly grasped their weapons, and manfully assailed the barbarians. The Pagans, however, who had been wasted and worn out by being exposed to the sea and storm for nearly a month's time, in vain attempted to repel the attack—in a moment they were dispersed, and at a place called Swanwich, all sunk into the sea, and all at the same time perished.†

---

* "Piratis." See DUCANGE in verb "*pirata.*"

† ASSER, *Vit.* p. 9. This loss of the Danish fleet is accounted for in a different manner by others. "This year came the Danish army into Exeter from Wareham, whilst the navy sailed west about, until they met with a great mist at sea, and there perished 120 ships at Swanwich." *Saxon Chronicle,* (Ingram.)

The Pagan army, which had left Wareham for the purpose of proceeding to Exeter, were meanwhile pursued by King Alfred; but as they were well provided with horses, he was not able to overtake them before the Pagans had established themselves in a fortress, which was unassailable by his forces. Again a truce was concluded, the number of hostages that he required was given to him, and they bound themselves by the most solemn oaths henceforth to observe the terms of a most perfect peace with him.*

In the month of August this army marched into Mercia, and the portion of the kingdom that they occupied they distributed one part amongst themselves, and another part to the unwise king's thane Ceolwulf.†

"Denique classes eorum elevant vela, dant vento carinas, procella ingruit tristis, mergitur *pars non minima* centum numero carinæ supremæ."—ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 3. pp. 844, 845. "Paganus exercitus apud Werham *cum classe* relictus Eaxancestre venit, sed priusquam illuc pervenisset, 120 naves *ex eis* marina tempestate submersæ sunt." F. WIGORN. p. 590, ad an. 877. See ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 328. *Chron. Petriburg*, p. 25. H. HUNT. p. 350.

* *Sax. Chron.* 877.

† ASSER, *Vit.* p. 9. See F. WIGORN. 877, p. 590. H. HUNT. p. 350. ETHELWERD, p. 845.

"In the month of November, in this year," observes Baronius, "the Pope John VIII. upon being consulted by Eadred (Ethered) the English archbishop, addressed letters to the king of the English, advising him to imitate his royal and pious predecessors, and to pay fitting and due respect to the bishops, the servants of God. The pope also wrote to the archbishop, and amongst the expressions used by him were the following:—

"According as the necessity of these times requires we exhort and warn you as a brother, that laying aside all temporal fear, you prove yourself a fitting servant of God, opposing yourself, as a wall, in defence of the temple of the Lord, and that fired with

In the year 878, and when King Alfred was in the seven and twentieth year of his age, the before-mentioned army of the Pagans abandoned Exeter, and established their winter quarters at Chippenham, a royal vill in the western district of Wiltshire.* They then subjected to their dominion most of the inhabitants of the province, and compelled by their hostile proceedings many to seek in fear and poverty for refuge and safety beyond the sea.† At the same time King Alfred with a few of his knights

---

zeal on His behalf, you never cease strenuously to resist not merely the king alone, but all inclined to act wickedly," &c. BARONIUS *Annal.* vol. xv. pp. 311, 312, ad an. 877, § 29. See ALFORD, *Ann. Eccles. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 139. § 4. R. DICET, *Archiepisc. Cantuar.* pars ii. *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 681.

* ASSER, *Vit.* p. 9.

† "Transpellunt Gallias mare in oras." ETHELWERD, p. 845. "In hoc quoque persecutionis turbine constituti fideles Christi episcopi, cum *sanctorum reliquiis* et ecclesiarum thesauris, populisque regionis transmare fugerunt——" ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 329.

Amongst the relics of saints that were at this period transported from England were those of St. Gudwal, a priest, hermit, and bishop of the seventh century, and whose piety was so extraordinary that when saying mass, it is recorded of him, that saints and angels were visibly present at the great sacrifice :

"Cerneres assistentes Deo ministros, cœlitus descendentes, virum sanctum circumvallantes, et ei vice mortalium astantes : et sicut Deo devota Christiana plebs, ad templum Domini convolans, sacerdotis sui ministerio intendit, officio applaudit, communicat benedictionibus ; ita cælestem illam catervam, in illa intelligibili natura, qua apparere solet hominibus, virum sanctum mirareris invisere, tremendis sanctæ Eucharistiæ mysteriis interesse, et nomen Domini cum tanto Pontifice in magna reverentia glorificare." *Vit.* S. GUDWAL, *Episc.* c. 2. § 11. *Act. Sanct.* (Junii), vol. i. p. 733. See c. 5. § 50, p. 741, and note *b.*, p. 742. *Britannia Sancta*, vol. i. pp. 344, 345. The relics of this saint are now deposited at Gand. The Rev. Alban Butler inclines to the opinion that St. Gudwal, when living, removed to the continent. See *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vi. p. 752.

and vassals betook himself to the forests and the fens of Somersetshire, where he passed his days in sorrow, great hardship and extreme tribulation. He had nought to supply the necessities of life excepting whatever he could procure by open hostile attacks, or by stealthly forages from his Pagan foes, or from Christians who had yielded submission to the Pagans, and acknowledged them as their lords.*

There is a place to the west of the extreme boundary of the Anglian territory named Ethelingeie, that is, "the island of nobles,"† which is so surrounded with lakes on every side, as to be inaccessible but by boats.‡ In this island there was a very large ash-grove, in which were to be found deer, goats, and other animals of the same kind, and in the centre, a level piece of solid earth, not more than two acres in extent. To this place Alfred repaired, having in his distress parted with the few knights who had hitherto attended him, and in the hope of escaping the pursuit of his enemies, sought here alone, and unaccompanied, for refuge and concealment. The king perceived that there was on the island the cabin of a person unknown, and to that he betook himself. He there sought for and obtained harbourage as a poor and simple traveller, and worked as the servant of his host and hostess, aiding them in the management of all their little simple affairs.

The king in answer to questions put to him by his host, who was a neatherd, as to who and what he was, or why

---

* Asser, *Vit.* 9.

† Athelney, in Somersetshire, near Taunton. Coxe. See Camden's *Britannia*, vol. i. pp. 79, 97.

‡ Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 330.

he travelled to such a wild and desert spot as Athelney, replied, that he was one of the king's attendants, who had suffered defeat with his sovereign in battle, and who being pursued by the enemy, had in his flight reached that place. The neatherd gave implicit credit to these words, felt the greatest pity for the stranger, and with a willing heart supplied him with all the necessaries of life.

One day it happened, that the neatherd, according to his usual custom, proceeded to drive the swine of which he had charge to their usual place of pasturage, leaving the king and his wife alone in his hut.* Upon this day, it chanced that the wife of the rustic had placed some cakes of bread at the fire to be baked.† The king was sitting close to the fire, and preparing for use a bow, arrows, and other warlike weapons, when this unhappy woman perceiving that her cakes at the fire were getting burnt, ran in a great hurry, moved them away, rebuked the invincible king, and said to him :—"Oh! what a man thou art!

"Canst set and see the bread burn thus (thou sot)
"And canst not turn what thou so well lov'st hot."‡

---

* ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 330.

† ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 9. We prefer giving this anecdote in the words of Asser, who it is probable recites it in the same manner in which he heard it from king Alfred himself.

‡ "Urere quos cernis panes gyrare moraris,
"Cum nimium gaudes has manducare calentes." ASSER.

The translation of these lines is adapted from Spelman's Life of Asser, book i. § 68, p. 54.

To the statement of Asser, is added, by Roger of Wendover; "The king's attention being excited by the harsh words of the woman, he sat with down-cast looks, and not only turned the cakes but even gave them to her well and perfectly baked." Vol. i. pp. 330, 331.

This shrewish woman little thought she thus spoke to king Alfred, who had waged so many wars against the Pagans, and had won so many victories from them. This self-glorious king, upon whom the Lord had been pleased to bestow triumphs over his foes, and prosperity even in the midst of adverse circumstances; and not only that, but the self-same merciful God had often and often been pleased to permit him to be overwhelmed with enemies, and afflicted with misfortunes, and, as in this case, to be so cast down, that he should be scorned by one of his own subjects; and all this, in order that he might know and feel, that there is but One, Who is the Lord of all, to Whom every knee must bend, in Whose hands are the hearts of kings, Who depresses the powerful, and exalts the humble; Who wills sometimes that His faithful servants, even when they are most happy should be reached by the slings of their foes, and yet when so humbled never despair of the mercy of God, no more than when exalted, they should pride themselves in the glory which He has given to them; but, in all things, perceive and acknowledge that all that is allotted to them, whether for weal or for woe, comes from Him, and is His doing.

We do believe that the misfortunes to which the king was subjected at this time had not undeservedly fallen upon him;* because in the early period of his reign, when he was still very young, and his thoughts were only those of a young man, and that persons who were his subjects

* "Quam siquidem adversitatem præfato regi illatam non immerito ei evenisse credimus." ASSER. It is in this candid fearless spirit that the monks wrote contemporary history. We can discover no spirit like to this in modern Anti-Catholic biographers of living princes.

came to him, and in the straights in which they were placed appealed to him, and being oppressed by those who had power, implored his assistance and protection, he did not wish either to hear their complaints nor to afford his aid, but rather utterly disregarded him. These facts were well known to that blessed man Neot* his kinsman, who was then living, and lamented them in the bitterness of his heart, and who, filled with a prophetic spirit, predicted to the king, that by reason of this conduct the most dire adversity would yet overtake him. He, however, at that time, cared not a jot for the truly religious rebuke of the man of God, and refused to believe in the truth of the prophecy which had been announced to him.† And yet,

---

* "Beatissimus vir Neotus adhuc vivens in carne." ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 10.

† Alfred was not however always a disbeliever in prophecies. Adversity abated his pride and chastened his spirit. The account of the last interview between the saint and the king is thus given in the *Lives of English Saints.*

"It came to pass on a day that the king went, as he was wont, to see the man of God; who, when he came to him, among many other things, rebuked him again for his misconduct. He set before him the pains of eternal fire, and showed how that those who are mighty upon earth shall hereafter mightily be tormented. And besides this, in the spirit of prophecy, he foretold to him all which should befall him afterwards. Thou seest, O king, what now thou sufferest from thine enemies, and thou shall suffer more hereafter; for in thy kingdom thou art proud and tyrannical, whereas before the eyes of the Divine Majesty thou oughtest rather with the king and prophet David to have shown thyself meek and humble. Therefore by a foreign nation that knoweth not Christ, thou shalt be driven hence. Alone shalt thou escape from thine enemies, and shalt lie concealed under the hands of God, and so for thy sins thou shalt remain many days. Nevertheless I have obtained for thee by my prayers, that if thou wilt turn from thine iniquities, God wilt yet have mercy on thee and restore thee to thy state and sceptre. Now therefore take thou more wholesome counsel for thyself and people, and send men to Rome with

we know, that whatever sin man commits, it is necessary, that either here or in the next world, he must, in whatsoever wise God willeth, be punished for it: but He, who is the true and pious judge, would not leave this foolishness of the king unpunished in this world, in order that He might spare him in the last strict judgment.* And hence too it was that the self same Alfred very often fell into such an absolute state of wretchedness, that none of his subjects knew either where he was, nor what had become of him.†

King Alfred had remained alone with the neatherd, in this place, for some time, when he was rejoined by several of his soldiers, and through their means, at his suggestion, was constructed a fort flanked with ramparts and towers as a fitting citadel, from which they might issue forth, to make frequent attacks upon the enemy.‡ At this period

---

presents for our most reverend father, and entreat him that he will of his clemency be pleased to remit the tax upon the English school. And behold I go the way of all flesh: our Lord Jesus Christ has revealed to me that I am soon to depart hence. Now, therefore, when Divine Providence shall have fulfilled its purpose concerning thee, and shall have rightly punished thee for thy misdeeds, then be thou of good heart, and put thy trust in Him who ruleth all things, and pray for his assistance; and the Almighty God, by me his servant, shall hear thy prayers and restore thee again to thy place." *Lives of English Saints* (Hermit Saints) pp. 113, 114.

* "Quia igitur quicquid ab homine peccatur, aut hic, aut in futuro necesse est ut quolibet modo puniatur: noluit verus ac pius judex illam regis insipientiam esse impunitam in hoc seculo; quatenus illi parceret in districto judicio." Asser, *Vit.*, p. 10.

† Asser, *Vit.*, pp. 9, 10.

‡ Roger de Wendov., vol. i. p. 331. "Athelney lyith on Thon and ther is a bridge of wood to enter the abbey, (Leland., vol ii. f. 56) which was founded A.D. 808, for Benedictines, and valued at £209 per annum. (Tanner, p. 465.) Near it was found a jewel

he had no other means of maintaining himself and his followers, except whatever he might be able to procure, in forages, by the chace, or fishing.*

Upon a certain day Alfred had sent out all his attendants on a fishing expedition, and no person was in his habitation, with the exception of himself, his wife, and a male servant.† A stranger appeared at the door—passed the threshold, and asked for food,‡ Alfred moved by pity, and his accustomed charity, ordered that what was asked should be given, although informed by the servant that all that was left for the sustenance of the day was a single loaf of bread, and a small quantity of wine. Alfred gave thanks to God when he was told of this, and joyfully bade that the half of both should be given to the poor mendicant. These orders were faithfully executed. The servant went to his master to tell him with what expressions the stranger had given utterance to his thanks, but upon hurrying back to the poor man he was surprised to find the wine and bread alike untasted, and that the stranger had departed, although there was no mode by which a person could make his way through the lakes and fens, unaided by a boat, and no such thing, he knew, was then to be found on the island.

This circumstance first excited the surprise, and then

---

of gold enamelled like a bulla or amulet, to hang round the neck, circumscribed 'Alfred ordered me to be made.'" CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 97.

* BROMTON. *Chron.*, p. 811.

† *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, p. 71. (Twysden.)

‡ The manner in which Alfred was engaged at the moment is thus described by another authority:—"—— in tuguriunculo residens meditaretur in lege Dei, omnisque Davidicis proscriptionis suæ solaretur injuriam."—ETHELRED ABB. RIEVAL. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, p. 353.

afforded a theme for deep reflection to the mind of Alfred. Thus were his thoughts engaged until three o'clock that day, when his attendants returned from fishing, bringing with them three boat loads of fish, and declaring that they had caught more in that day than in the preceding years, in which they had been dwelling in that fenny region.

This circumstance, whilst it added to the satisfaction, also encreased the solicitude of the monarch. The day however was passed in purer happiness, and in the enjoyment of greater abundance than his household had been for some time accustomed to. At night, upon retiring to rest with his wife, the queen at once sunk into a deep sleep, whilst Alfred, upon whom the events of the day had made a deep impression, lay awake in his bed. He was thus wakeful and thoughtful, when lo! there shone before him a great light, bright and refulgent as the rays of the sun, and in the midst of this light there appeared an old black-haired man, a priest, wearing his sacerdotal robes, and bearing in his right hand a copy of the Gospels richly adorned with gems and gold.*

The aged priest blessed Alfred, and upon being earnestly questioned by the king, as to who he was, and how he should be addressed by name, thus replied to him:—

"My dear son Alfred, be thou of good cheer, I am "he upon whom thou didst this day prove thy charity, by "bestowing upon me food. I am named Cuthbert, a "soldier of Christ. Take courage, attend diligently to "what I say to thee. Hear with a joyous heart what I "now deliver unto thee. For henceforth I will be to thee

* "Habens in dextera manu Evengelii textum auro gemmisque ornatum." *Hist. de S. Cuthbert.*, p. 71.

"a shield, a friend, and a friend to thy posterity. And "now I have to tell thee what thou shalt do hereafter. "Arise at the earliest dawn of the morning. Sound "boldly and strongly thy horn three times, so that thy "enemies may hear its notes and be stricken with terror. "About the hour for nones, thou shalt have fifty armed "soldiers under thy command; and to thee this shall be "a sign that thou mayst place confidence in what I now "say to thee, that when seven days have passed away, "thou shalt through the gift of God, and my intercession, "find an entire army equipped and ready to aid thee at the "mount of Assandun. Then and there shalt thou engage "in battle with the enemy, and thou shalt doubtless obtain "the victory over them. Be of good heart—be bold—be "fearless—for God will deliver thy enemies into thy hands, "and all this land shall be the inheritance of thee, and "thy children, and of thy children's children. Be thou "then faithful to me, and to my people, because all Albion "is given to thee, and to thy sons. Be just, for thou art "the chosen king of the entire of Britain. May God "have mercy upon thee, and may thy enemies never pre-"vail against thee—such is my prayer—of me, who am "thy friend."*

---

* *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto.*, pp. 71, 72. (Twysden.) An account of this vision of St. Cuthbert to king Alfred is given in other authors, see Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. pp. 381, 382. Ingulphus., p. 26. *Chron. Mailros.*, p. 144. S. Dunelm., p. 18. Ethelrd. Rieval., pp. 353, 354. Bromton, p. 811. Alford, vol. iii. p. 142, § 8, 9. Higden., p. 257. M. West, p. 177. Rog. de Hoveden, p. 417.

The manner in which this vision is narrated by William of Malmsbury (*Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 121,) is deserving of notice. He says, that the king when in more prosperous circumstances frequently mentioned the perils to which he had been exposed in

As soon as St. Cuthbert had given utterance to these words, the light and the speaker vanished at the same moment; but the following morning, which brought with it the reinforcement of new friends, and fresh sol-

---

Athelney, and how he had escaped from them through the merits of St. Cuthbert. "Solebat ipse postea in tempora feliciora reductus, casus suos jocunda hilarique comitate familiaribus exponere, qualiterque *per beati Cuthberti meritum* eos evaserit." In the vision as stated by Malsmbury we find the same prophecy uttered by St. Cuthbert, but the proof given to the king why he should place credit in it, was, that despite of the wintry weather, and the water being covered with ice, and every thing occurring which was calculated to discourage the hope of the fisher, that still his men would bring home baskets full of fish. Prosperous times were again promised to England, because "through the merits of her native-born saints, God had looked with an eye of mercy upon her."——"*Indigenarum sanctorum meritis*, super eam misericordiæ suæ oculis respicit." Malmsbury adds that the same vision was seen, and the same prophecy heard by "*Matremque* etiam prope cubantem." In the biography, from which we have quoted in the text, it is said that his wife was by his side when he had this vision. But if Malmsbury be correct, who could be "the mother" that was concealed with him in Athelney? Not his own —"matrem suam"— she had long since been dead. To whom then could the designation be applicable? Alford suggests to the mother of his wife. There are many probabilities to support this suggestion. Mercia was then held by the Danes, or their recreant delegate Ceolwulf. The mother-in-law of Alfred was a Mercian lady—and Asser testifies not only to her great piety, but also as to having himself seen her in the court of Alfred. "Cujus feminæ mater Eadburh nominabatur, de regali genere Merciorum regis, quam nos vidimus ipsi propriis oculorum nostrorum obtutibus non paucis ante obitum suum annis frequenter vidimus; venerabilis scilicet femina——castissima vidua"—(Asser, *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 6.) The word "mater" we may here remark will not at all times bear the literal translation of "mother." See Ducange, in verb. "*mater*."

As to the prophecy of St. Cuthbert, that the descendants of Alfred should retain possession of the throne of England, and its verification, see Spelman's *Life of Alfred*, book iii. § 122, pp. 223, 224.

diers, proved how veracious were the promises of the night.*

The brother of Inguar and Hubba, who had wintered in Wales, where the Christians had been plundered and slaughtered, sailed with twenty-three ships to Devonshire, and there, whilst still pursuing his career of crime, he was, with twelve hundred of his followers, destroyed by the subjects of king Alfred, before the fortress of Kinwic.†

Many of the king's subjects had fled with their families to this fortress, and in the hope of saving their lives shut themselves up in it; but the Pagans, upon perceiving that the fortress was unprepared for a seige, and utterly incapable of defence, beyond the fact, that it had walls built in the ancient manner of the Britons, they determined not to make any attack upon it. Its position secured it from assault on every side, but one, the eastern approach to it. This they left unassailed, whilst at the same time they closely invested the place, believing that those who guarded it, must, under the pressure of hunger and thirst, yield it into their hands. They calculated upon such a result, because they were assured of the fact, that there was no spring of water to be found close to the fortress. The issue of these events was far different to their expectations, and widely contrary to their hopes.

The Christians, acting under the inspiration of Heaven, determined not to endure the misery which threatened to overwhelm them—they believed it to be much better rather than succumb to such a fate, to seek, and deserve either an immediate death or a speedy victory, and there-

* Ethelred. Abb. Rieval., *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, p. 354.

† Asser., *Vit.*, p. 10.

fore with the first rays of the morning's sun, they burst forth from their fortress, attacked the foe, who were utterly unprepared for such an encounter, put them and their king to death (with the exception of a few who were able to make their escape to the ships,) and their triumph was rewarded with the collection of an immense spoil.

Amongst the spoil should be mentioned the Northmen's standard of "the Raven." Of this standard, it was stated that the materials for it had been woven by the three sisters of Inguar and Hubba, the daughters of Lodbroc, and that it all had been prepared and made during the noon-tide hour.* They who used this standard, also said that in

---

* "*Dicunt* enim quod tres scrores Hungari et Habbæ, filiæ videlicet Lodebrochi illud vexillum texuerunt, et totum paraverunt illud uno meridiano tempore." ASSER. *Vit.* p. 10. The manner in which this statement is made, proves that the bishop of St. Davids wished to indicate what were the superstitions of the Northmen, and not that he himself attached any credit to them. How firmly the Northmen believed in witchcraft is abundantly proved by Snorro and other authors. See *Inglinga Saga*, c. 7. 16, 21. *Harald Harfager's Saga*, c. 34, 36. SNORRO, vol. i. pp. 7, 8, 16, 21, 110, 111, 112, 114. The last saga deserves notice because it is there stated, that a person, knowing his father's hatred to witchcraft burnt his own brother alive! and with him eighty other wizards, "Ubi fratrem Ragnvaldum cum sociis Magis numero octoginta in domo ubi erant, vivos igne cremavit."—(Peringskiöld's translation). See a very interesting article in *Dublin Review*, vol. xx, in which it is shewn (pp. 74, 75), how frightful and cruel was the persecution of persons accused of witchcraft, in the Anti-Catholic states of America, Sweden, Scotland, Switzerland, and in which it is also proved that the first person who laboured with success to put a stop to the cruel effusion of human blood was Frederick Spe, *a Jesuit* (p. 76).

Witches, enchantments, and incantations, superabound in the pages of the Northern historians. It may interest the reader to be told of some of them extracted from a single author, Torfæus, in his "*Historia Norvegica.*" First, as to Odin, it is said of him

every battle in which it was borne before them, if they were destined to obtain the victory the figure of the bird

---

"omnium magicarum artium notitiam professus," that he taught magic in runic letters, and rhymes, as the primary and peculiar elements of the science; that he could draw souls from the grave by enchantment, and evoke the spirits of those who had been hanged; and hence, designated, our author assures us, "the God of the hanged;" and in the same chapter we are told that the Asæ were said to be the first inventors of magic arts (lib. iii. c. 17, vol. i. p. 144.) Oddus was a magician so accomplished in his art, "ut absque carina altum perarrans, hostilia sæpe navigia, concitatis carmine procellis, everteret" (lib. viii. c. 4. vol. i. p. 346). Hedinus meets a giant woman—"facta est illi obviam fæmina gigas lupo insidens, habinarum vices colubri supplebant" (lib. x. c. 32, vol. i. p. 462). An awful and abominable story is told of Sigruna and her husband, Helgius (lib. x. c. 32, vol. i. pp. 463, 464). Seid is a necromantic rite of extreme power (lib. v. c. 15, vol. i. p. 141). *Gau* magic flies of a sky-blue colour said to be evil spirits, (lib. ii. c. 27. vol. i. p. 107, see also p. 108, for other magic tales). *Grandreid* is the equitation of wizards (lib. vii. § iii. c. 3, vol. i. p. 321). Heidis "præsaga fæmina futurorum scientiam professa," and was so distinguished as to obtain the name of *Volva* or "the Sybill!" She was always attended by fifteen male, and fifteen female servants (lib. vi. c. i. vol. i. p. 265). In the account of Bera, the mother of Bödvar Biarkar, we meet with what may, perhaps, be considered as the original of the nursery tale of "Beauty and the Beast," (lib. vi. c. iii. vol. i. pp. 276, 277, 278). A magic belt falls from the air, (lib. viii. c. ix. vol. i. p. 358). The adventures of Elfgrodius, and Boduar seem to be borrowed from the same source as Shakspere's "Comedy of Errors" (lib. vi. c. vii. vol. i. pp. 282, 283, 284.) A man is turned in one place into a serpent (lib. x. c. 34, vol. i. p. 467), and in another, a great hero fights with a dragon (lib. vii. § iii. c. i. vol. i, p. 316). The *Trolli* are not only giants, but great magicians (lib. iii. c. 2, vol. i. p. 114). Two witches (*lamias*) are seen riding on the back of a whale, and raise storms by their incantations, (lib. v. c. 26, vol. i. pp. 227, 228). A Triton or sea-man is caught, and is never heard to make but one observation, and that is a very sensible one, viz., "that a man is a fool who beats his two best friends, his dog and his wife," (lib. iv. c. 9. vol. i. p. 182). Framar is made by Odin to have a skin impenetrable by steel, (lib. vii. § iii. c. 3, vol. i. p. 321); and another hero, Harald *Hilde*tannis, was so called from

with which it was impressed seemed to flutter livelily, and joyfully; but if they were to sustain defeat, it appeared to

---

Hilde, the goddess of war, because he was so skin-hardened by incantations, that he could go into battle, without hauberk or helmet. The manner in which this gift was conferred upon him is thus described:—"———regnorum proceres seidicis incantantionibus nefandisque sacrificiis perpetratis, Diis supplicarunt, ut ab omni ferro immunis cutis duritie ictus omnes eluderet, (lib. x. c. 25, vol. i. p. 437).

A third hero was "promised" by an Irish princess a magic shirt, or "*interula*," which was to have these extraordinary qualities:—"——interulam se ei confecturam, auro argentoque contextam, iisque dotibus imbutam, qualibus aliam nullam unquam viderit, pollicebatur; hac enim indutus, ait, terra marique frigoris expers eris, nec natatu defatigaberis, ab igne, fame, ferro immunis, omnis periculi securus; unum tamen restat, quod avertere nequeo, nam si in fugam versus elabendo salutem quæras, inutilis futura est," (lib. vi. § 2. c. 4, vol. i. p. 271). Not merely were the defensive arms magical; but also the offensive. There was the sword "angruadalis," fatal to the family of the great magician Kolus, (lib. v. c. 3, 4, 6, vol. i. pp. 196, 197, 198, 200.) The enchanted sword "Lövium," (lib. vi. c. 7, vol. i. p. 282), and another "tirfingus" prized by its possessor more than gold, (lib. x. c. 10, vol i. p. 430). Along with these we have wonderful stories of Brynhildis Budlina, (lib. x. c. 36, vol. i. p. 470), of Gunhildis, (lib. iv. c. 5, 7, vol. ii. pp. 179, 185); of Lodmund and Thrasius, two more magicians by their incantations trying to inundate each other's lands, (lib. ii. c. 12, vol. ii. p. 128); of the idol Lyter; of ships with black sails, and no sailors; a gigantic sea-witch, of bags filled with fire in a naval engagement, &c., (lib. i. c. 39, vol. ii. pp. 70, 71); of Hroaldus, a wizard who evaded the pursuits of the law, by two magic waves, "duas præcelsæ molis undis navigiis diras et inaccessas," (lib. x. c. 10, vol. ii. p. 503); of Geirhildis a witch changing herself into a cow, (lib. ii. c. 22, vol. ii. p. 149); and of Egvindus Kelda, the head of the magicians, escaping by his incantations, at a time when all his brother wizards had been made drunk and burned in the house, in which they had been collected together, (lib. ix. c. 16, vol. ii. pp. 402, 403). These references to a single author, and they might be greatly extended, must tend to shew at least, how inferior as historical authorities are the Northern traditions or sagas to the compositions of the monkish writers. We cannot pass from these wild tales without

stand moveless, and with drooping wings—and they declared that these auguries had ever been justified by the event.*

All the Pagans who had escaped from the defeat at Kinwic fled to king Guthrum, who with all his forces devastated the West Saxon kingdom from shore to shore: his soldiers like locusts destroying the country, wherever it was to be found defenceless.†

It was in the Easter of this year, that king Alfred, aided by the few forces under his command, erected the fortification at Athelney, from which he frequently assailed the Pagans, and always was aided in his attacks upon them, by the inhabitants of Somersetshire, who lived near to his fortress.‡

Not long after, the king ventured forth from this place

---

shewing a curious coincidence between the practises ascribed to Odin, and those attributed to persons believed to be witches in modern times.

Torfæus says of Odin; "Præterea se in diversas species transformare ab hominibus, quorum oculos præstigiis illuserat, credebatur nam *corpus quasi exanime solo jacuisse visum est*, dum spiritum formam avis, vel quadrupedis serpentis, vel piscis indutum, remotissima loco exiguo temporis momento peragrasse, propriis, vel alienis negotiis expediundis, persuadaret." (Lib. iii. c. 17, vol i. p. 144.) (See SNORRO, *Inglinga Saga*, c. 7, vol. i. pp. 7, 8).

In this description we have precisely that given of the witch, in the "Novela de los Perros." She is seen "tendio en el suelo como muerta," and whilst in that state, she had previously declared——"a nuestro parecer, mudamos forma, y convertidos en gallos, lechuzus, o cuervos, vamus al lugar donde nuestro dueno nos espera."—CERVANTES, *Novelas Exemplares*, pp. 594, 595.

* ASSER. *Vit.* p. 10. See LAPPENBERG's *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 51, note 1.

† ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 329.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*, 878.

which might be regarded as his cell, for the purpose of accomplishing a feat, in which there was a certain danger that could alone be evaded by the exercise of uncommon art.* There was but one amongst all his attendants—and this a person in whose fidelity he placed the most implicit confidence—who was made aware of his project. It was to venture disguised as a jester into the encampment of the Danish king (Guthrum). There as a professor of the science of minstrelsy† he was permitted to present himself, and to penetrate even into the recesses of the royal banquetting room. There all that had been concealed from his knowledge hitherto was laid bare to his view, and every secret project of the foe was heard with his own ears. He remained in the encampment several days, and when he had obtained a full and perfect knowledge of all that he desired to be acquainted with, he returned to Athelney, and gathering together his ealdormen, he unfolded to them the state of apathy into which their foes had fallen, and demonstrated how easily they might be defeated.‡

It was in the seventh week after Easter in this year, that he rode at the head of his soldiers, from Athelney by the eastern side of Selwood to Brinton, and there there came out to meet him all the people of Somersetshire, of Wiltshire, and of a great part of Hampshire,§—of all who had come by land, and whom a fear of the Pagans

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 121.

† "*Joculatoriæ* professor artis." W. Malmsb. Rex ipse fingens se *joculatorem* assumta cithara." Ingulphus. *Hist.* p. 26.

‡ W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 121.

§ *Sax. Chron.*, 878.

did not prevent from crossing the sea.* All these upon seeing their king again, acted as became them as loyal subjects; for exceedingly great was their joy when they looked upon him, who seemed to them, after his great tribulations, to be restored to life.†

Alfred stood in the midst of his army and excited their courage, by such words as these.‡

---

* ASSER. *Vit.*; p. 10.

† IBID. The place appointed by Alfred, for meeting his followers in military array, was, observes Mr. Turner, "on the east of Selwood forest. A dream of St. Neot's appearing to him, and promising both assistance and great success, is placed at this crisis. *It may have been suggested by the king's policy*, or *may* have occurred naturally from his memory of his sacred monitor; and anticipating its encouraging effects he *may* have circulated it among his friends." TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 571, see notes 5 and 6. The *charity* and the *philosophy* of this Anti-Catholic writer consist in suggesting, that the pious Alfred was guilty of falsehood, hypocrisy, and blasphemy! There appears to persons of the peculiar notions of Mr. S. Turner, to be nothing like a miracle in a pious, virtuous, candid, good man, belying his whole life to promote some temporary object—that which is incredible to them is, that any man can be so good as to merit by his meekness, patience, and humility, a manifestation of the Divine will, and the intercession of the saints. They believe what is hard even to suppose; they disbelieve that which has always been propounded by the church, believed by Christians in all ages, and that modern schismatics alone have rejected.

‡ ETHELRED ABB. RIEVAL. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.* p. 354. The speech of Alfred is given in this author immediately after the king had beheld St. Cuthbert in a vision. Mr. Turner states on the authority of a MS. which he had inspected, that a speech was delivered by King Alfred immediately previous to the battle of Ethandune, at that moment when the armies on both sides were arrayed against each other. "He reminded them," (his soldiers) says Mr. Turner in his version of this speech, "that they were about to combat both for their country and for themselves; he conjured them to act manfully, and he promised them a glorious victory." *History of Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 573, see note 12.

"Fellow soldiers, I give thanks to my God that He has "not turned away from my prayers nor withheld His "mercy from me. He strikes, and He cures, He inflicts "mortification, and He affords consolation, He makes "men poor, and He enricheth them, He humbleth, "and He exalteth them; He is our Lord, who gives us "peace, and who permits us to suffer evil—He is our "Lord and He can do all things. Until now, our Lord "punishing us for our sins has scourged us with bitter "stripes, but He has not delivered us over to death. He "has regarded the prayer of the humble, and He has "not despised it. Behold! then, in the season of His "mercy, this poor remnant of the English people is "saved! who can doubt that it is so? for who, may I ask, "is it that has evoked you from your various hiding places; "who has gathered you thus together from so many differ- "ent provinces; or who has urged you forth, so that "laying aside your wonted fears, you should either alone, "or, in bands, make your way through the hostile ranks "of infuriated Pagans, in order that you might come to "this conference with me? Do you not yourselves ob- "serve that your foes are disturbed, that they are in a "state of commotion and that fear has seized upon them? "It is not by their military skill, nor through their mere "personal courage alone, that they have prevailed against "us; but the right hand of God has been heavy upon

---

We believe the speech of Alfred will be found more applicable to that part of his life to which we have assigned it than to any other.

If the reader should come to the conclusion we have misplaced it, we hope at least he will be of opinion, that we were justified in translating it—that it is, at least, of sufficient interest to find a place in *English History*.

"us, and the rod of His wrath has stricken us severely for "our sins, whilst the cruelty of Pagans has been employed "for our purification; not for our destruction. Lo! the "eyes of the Lord are again turned towards us, and His "ears are open to our prayers. Be prepared then to act "manfully: let your hearts be comforted, for in proportion "to the manifold afflictions which hitherto we have en- "dured shall be the abundance of consolation in which "we may hope to be joyful. Consider who are your ene- "mies, why you fight with them, and what is the neces- "sity that forces you to contend against them. Christians "are arrayed against Pagans; those devoted to religion "against the impious; contrite and poor in spirit we are "about to battle with the proud. And wherefore? Be- "cause they have destroyed our churches, dug up our "altars, spared neither age, nor rank, nor sex. We seek "for nought that belongs to another: we only struggle to "recover what is our own. They have robbed us of our "property; they possess it; they waste it in vicious "luxury; they desecrate by expending it in sacrifices to "their idols. And if you ask me what is the necessity of "fighting against them? Listen: it is soon and easily "told. It is that infidels may no longer impiously insult "the christian name, nor prefer their idols to the true God, "by supposing that the many victories which they have "won, and that are ascribable to our sins, should be attri- "buted to the power and influence of the demons whom "they worship. In fine, we fight against them, because "we will not allow them to deprive us of our wives, to "enslave our daughters, to dishonour our families, nor to "submit patiently whilst impious and perverse men de- "grade the entire of our English nobility to the condition

"of base serfs. Since we have received from the merciful "hand of our Lord the fitting penance for our sins; let "us now thus tried, thus proved, thus purified, boldly, "bravely and confidently attack an enemy, whom we alike "excel in the truth of our faith, and the justice of our "cause. This is a course to which Christ incites us, "piety prompts, necessity urges us. Our Saviour aids us, "angels favour us, and saints even from heaven have "descended to bid us onward, and to predict to us a "happy issue to our undertaking."*

After speaking these words, he unfolded to all present the nocturnal vision, and the prophecy with which he had been favored; and as soon as the multitude heard his narrative, they all with one voice exclaimed, "the Lord "will give strength and virtue to his people. Blessed be "the Lord!"†

At the first dawn of day on the following morning the king moved with his forces to a place called Ægclea, where he determined to encamp for the night,‡ and upon the day succeeding he advanced his standards to a place called Ethandun. There concentrating all his soldiers into a close compact body, he made a furious attack upon the entire army of the Pagans. The assault was long and vigorously maintained, and at length, through the Divine aid, victory was won by the Christians. The Pagans were overcome with a frightful slaughter, and even when

* ——"quibus Christus adest, quibus favent angeli, quibus sancti præsto sunt, quibus de cœlo oracula divina resultant." ETHELRED. RIEVAL.

† ETHELRED. ABB. RIEVAL., *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, pp. 354, 355.

‡ ASSER., *Vit.*, p. 10. Great doubt exists as to the proper modern name for this locality.

flying they were pursued, and all that could be overtaken before they reached the fortress to which they were endeavouring to retreat, were cut down. Every thing that Alfred could find outside of the fortress calculated to be an aid or useful to the Pagans was destroyed by him—soldiers, horses and cattle.

The king, having adopted this precaution, boldly planted his encampment in front of the Danish fort. He remained in this position for fourteen days, when the Pagans worn out with hunger, and cold, subdued by fear, and despairing of any other termination to their woes than death, sought to obtain terms of peace, and offered as many hostages for the fulfilment of its conditions as his majesty might choose to name, whilst he should be required to give none to them—terms such as they never before had tendered to any one. The king, upon hearing that the Danish messengers sought so humbly for peace, was moved with pity towards them—received from them the number of hostages which he suggested; and then the Pagans upon delivering them up swore, that they would with the utmost possible speed depart from his kingdom; whilst their royal leader Guthrum promised to become a Christian, and also that he would in the presence, and by the aid of king Alfred himself, accept of baptism. And all these self-same things which king Guthrum and his men promised to do, they faithfully performed.*

In the course of three weeks afterwards, king Guthrum, attended by thirty of his principal jarls,† met king Alfred

---

* Asser, *Vit.*, p. 10.

† "Electissimis de exercitu suo viris." Asser.

at Aller, which is not far distant from Athelney, and at that place Alfred was sponsor for king Guthrum.* The crisom-leasing of the Danish king was at Wedmor,† where the royal neophyte remained for twelve days with king Alfred, and upon his departure, was, as well as his attendants, honoured with many rich gifts by the English king.‡

——

In the year 879, the band of the Pagans, who had been

---

* *Sax. Chron.*, 878. Malmsbury states that not only the king, but his jarls, and nearly all the Danes were then baptised. ——"cum triginta proceribus et omni pene populo, baptizatus," *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 121. Ingulphus adds that those who refused baptism had to leave England. "Ceteri baptizare renuentes Anglia abjurata, Franciam navigio petierunt." *Hist.*, p. 26. The christian name taken by Guthrum was Athelstan. Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 333. F. Wigorn. p. 591.

† See Dr. Lingard's *History and Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 317, 318, 319, upon the baptism of adults. For our purposes the following extracts will suffice. Dr. Lingard observes, that the baptism concluded in this manner. "He," the adult, "was now anointed on the crown with chrism in the form of a cross, and a white linen cap called a chrismal was fastened over his head. * * * * It was expected he should return to the church on each of the next seven days to attend to daily instruction and to receive daily the communion. On the last *the chrismal was removed*, and the ceremony was concluded."

It may here be observed that in the sacred festivities at Wedmor, a conspicuous part is assigned to one of king Alfred's generals—Æthelnoth, the ealdorman of Somersetshire, who in the time of the greatest peril had maintained a small body of soldiers together. "Exiguo cum agmine sylva in quadam morabatur." Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. 3, p. 845. At Wedmor, it is added by the same author:—"dux pariter Æthelnoth abluit post lavacrum eundem in loco Vuedmor." *Ibid.*

‡ *Sax. Chron.*, 878. "Cui rex cum suis omnibus multa et optima ædificia largiter dedit." Asser., *Vit.*, p. 11. "Datæ ei provinciæ Orientalium Anglorum et Northanhimbrorum, ut eas sub

at Cirencester quitted that place for East Anglia, where their king, the recently baptised Guthrum divided the land amongst his followers, and established it henceforth as a place of habitation for the Danes. At the same time king Alfred built Seafford, that which once was a noble city, but now a poor village, and where at a subsequent period queen Algiva, the wife of king Edmund, and the descendant of Alfred, established a nunnery.*

In the course of this year an immense army of the Northern infidels came from across the sea, sailed up the Thames, and established their winter quarters at a place

---

fidelitate regis jure faveret hæreditario quas pervaserat latrocinio." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 125. "Ei præbruit rex Ælfred honores magnifice." ETHELWERD, p. 845. "Abeunti multa dedit munera." H. HUNT., p. 350. See ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 333. HOVEDEN, p. 418. S. DUNELM., *Hist. Reg.*, p. 129. BROMTON, p. 811. F. WIGORN, p. 591. In the baptism of king Guthrum and his nobles will be found many circumstances resembling those which occurred in the year 826, when Harald the Dane was baptised in the court of Louis le Debonnaire.

"Cæsar honore Dei Heroldum suscepit ab undis
Vestibus albidulis ornat et ipse manu.
* * * *
Regis honoratos Proceres relevantque, decorant,
Ast alios plures turba levavit aquis.
* * * *
Cæsar ei celsus prægrandia munera donat.
* * * *
Cætera namque cohors Francisco more paratur,
Vestimenta sibi Cæsar amore dedit."

ERMOLD. NIGELL. *Carmin.*, lib. iv., 359, 398. See THEGAN. *Gest Ludov.*, § 33, A.D. 826. *Vit. Ludov. Pii.*, § 40. *Gest. Louis le Debonnaire*, c. 14. EGINHARD, *Annal.*, 826. *Annal. Fuldens*, 826. MARIANUS SCOTUS, *Chron.*, 826. SIGEBERT, *Chron.*, 826. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vi. pp. 57, 58, 80, 107, 149. 187, 209, 228, 233. SAXO. GRAMMAT., *Hist. Danic.*, lib. ix, vol. i. pp. 175, 176.

* ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. pp. 333, 334.

called Fulham, which is on the banks of that river. These Pagans sailed the following year from Fulham, again crossed the seas, and effected a landing at Ghent, where they then wintered.*

Dumbert, the Bishop of Winchester, died in the year 879, and was succeeded by Denewulfus, a person, who, (if report speak truly) had not only reached an advanced age utterly ignorant of letters; but had even been a neatherd, and who, at the time that king Alfred was living as a fugitive in the woods, was met feeding his pigs by that monarch; and it is said that the latter was so attracted by the great talent displayed by him, that he had him educated, and when at a subsequent period he was found to be fitted by his knowledge for the dignity, was elevated to the bishopric of Winchester.†

---

* F. WIGORN, A.D. 879, 880, p. 591, *Sax. Chron.* H. HUNT. p. 350. If reliance can be placed on the Chronicle of Alberic, monk of Trois Fontaines, the leader of this band of pirates was "king Gnormund." See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, prefat. pp. xix., xx., § 20, and p. 58.

† F. WIGORN, A.D. 879, p. 591. According to ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 334, Denewulfus was the herdsman in whose house Alfred had taken shelter; but that statement is inconsistent with the fact, that the herdsman in Athelney was married, and even supposing his wife to have died, or that she had devoted herself to a religious life, still one year would not be sufficient to prepare an ignorant herdsman for the episcopal office. See W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 242. ALFORD. *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. p. 146, § 3, 4. HARPSFIELD, *Nov. Sæc.*, c. 9, p. 169. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. i. p. 208. COXE (notes on Roger de Wendover) vol. i. p. 334, note 5. GODWIN *de Præsul.*, pp. 207, 208. The statement in the text—that given by Florence of Worcester—appears to us a curious fact, but one by no means incredible—as it is quite different from the legend, that in the course of a year an ignorant man was raised from the lowest station in life to the mitre. Florence mentions what he states as a mere

In this year died Edwold, the brother of Edmund, king and martyr.* For years he had led the life of a hermit at Cernel,† where his only subsistence consisted of coarse

---

rumour—"si famæ creditur"—and we may well suppose that king Alfred, an admirer of genius, and a devoted disciple of religion, meeting a herdsman of great talent, and of extreme piety, even though uneducated, should have had him instructed—devoted to the priesthood, and in time elevated by his virtues and his knowledge to the episcopacy. To do this, is to act in the spirit of Catholicity in all ages. We have shown how St. Aidan and St. Wilfred gave the slaves their freedom, or raised men from being slaves to the holy, and the high offices, of the priesthood (see vol. i. pp. 278, 279, 416, 417, of this work.) The practice was not confined to England. We find the aristocratic writer Thegan complaining of "a detestable practice, which had long prevailed, of bestowing the mitre upon men who had been slaves." "Jamjudum illa pessima consuetudo erat ut ex vilissimis servis summi pontifices fierent," (c. 20.) See on this point, form 1st, for seeking the freedom of a slave in order that he might be elevated to the priesthood; 2nd, form of bestowing freedom upon a slave as he was about to become a priest. *Formulæ Lindenbrogianæ*, § 100. *Formula Ingenuitatis in Append. Marculf*, § 8. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. p. 557, vol. vi. pp. 78, 446, 447.

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 250. ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii., ad an. 880, p. 148, § 5.

† "Cerne, or Cernel in Dorsetshire," *Britannia Sancta*, vol. ii. p. 304. In this place a miracle is recorded by Wm. of Malmsbury, to have been worked by St. Augustine—and the name of the place to have been given from his using the words "I see God"—"*Cerno* Deum"—"quod *Hel* Deus dicatur Hebraice." *Gest. Pont.*, lib. ii. p. 250. "Cerne was a famous abbey * * It was valued at £515 per annum. *All its remains are a gateway and a noble stone barn.* Some *defaced monuments* of abbots were lately dug up in the site of the monastic church. The learned Saxon grammarian Ælfric was *a monk here.* CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 68. See also p. 60. (Gough.) Cobbett's notice of this place is curious. "A Benedictine abbey founded in the Saxon times by *a Mr.* Egelward; underwent several changes in after times; valued at the dissolution, at £623 13s. 2½d., now worth £12,473 4s. 2d.; granted, 17 Elizabeth, to John Dudley and others." *History of the Protestant Reformation*, vol. ii.

barley bread and water. He was, it is said, disgusted with what are deemed the delights of this world, and he was warned to holiness by the hard fortune that had befallen his brother, and overtaken himself. Absorbed in religious exercises, Edwold passed a life of great holiness, and was buried at Cernel—an interment which suggested in a succeeding age to a very rich man named Egelwald, the idea of building there a monastery in the honour of St. Peter—the riches that were thus employed were intended not for the pleasures of wasteful, extravagant, and crapulous mortals, but for the sole use of men who had devoted their lives to the service of their God.*

The army which had wintered in Fulham, proceeded in the year 881 against France, fought with its inhabitants, and at the conclusion of a great battle provided all their force with horses.† During this year a vast number of the monasteries in the kingdom of the Franks were destroyed by the Pagans, and the dread of their atrocious

---

Dorset. "Qui locus celebris habetur ob fontem quemdam, quem suis divus Augustinus precibus repente aperuit. In cujus rei memoriam conservandum sacellum super fontem illum constructum est, et sub altari arcuato fontis illius origo ostenditur." HARPSFIELD., *Hist. Eccl. Ang., Nov. Sæc.*, c. xii. p. 174. See DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 628, 629.

* "Non ita exiliter (ut putatur) quinimo abundanter si illi quorum interest non ea nebulonibus suis, sed Dei servis impertirent." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. pp. 250, 251.

† ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 11. *Sax. Chron.*, 881. F. WIGORN, p. 591. "Pagani equis adquisitis, hac illacque discurrunt omnia devastantes: his diebus plurima in eadem gente Monasteria concussa sunt et desolata." ROG. DE HOVEDEN, p. 418. ETHELWERD, p. 845.

deeds induced the monks of the monastery of Fleury to take from his sepulchre the remains of the blessed abbot Benedict, and to fly with them from one part of the country to the other.* Their persecutors in the succeeding year (882) sailed up the Maese, far into the Frankish dominions, and for the time there took up their quarters.†

In the course of the year 882, king Alfred went out to sea with the fleet. He was encountered by four of the large war ships‡ of the Northmen. In the battle that ensued he mastered two of these ships, in which every man had been slain fighting; but the other two surrendered to him—and yet not until every warrior had been disabled by the swords of his foemen, and so severely wounded as to be incapable of further resistance. §

---

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 335. Amongst the places and monasteries destroyed by the Northmen this year were Amiens, Arras, Corbie, Cambrai, Terouaine, Tournac, Cologne, Bonn, and Aix-la-Chapelle. "Aquisgrani in palatio equos stabulantes." *Script.* S. Rumold, *Act. Sanct.*, (Julii) vol. i. p. 245, c. 2, §. 10. ad ann. 882. See *Hist. Reg. Franc. Chron. Turonens.* Johan. Ther., *Chron. Sith.* S. Bert., *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix. pp. 42, 46, 70.

The remains of St. Benedict were not the only relics removed or concealed this year from an apprehension of their being desecrated by infidels. See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix., pp. 83, 109.

Alford opines that it was about the year 881 that king Alfred drew up his will; under the advice of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with the assent of the West Saxon nobility." See *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. pp. 149, 151, § 3, 13. Asser. *Vit.*, pp. 22, 23, 24.

† *Sax. Chron.* 882. The progress of this devastating band is particularly noticed by the other old English chroniclers and annalists. See Asser., *Vit.*, p. 11. Ethelwerd, p. 845, &c. &c.

‡ "Dromonos quatuor." Ethelwerd. "Four ship-rovers of the Danes." *Sax. Chron.* (Tindal's translation).

§ *Sax. Chron.* 882. Asser., *Vit.*, p. 11. Ethelwerd, p. 845.

It was in the year 882 that St. Cuthbert appeared in a vision at night to the abbot Eadred, and bade him tell to the bishop of the district that there was a person named Cuthred, the son of Hardeknute, who had been sold as a slave to a widowed female at Wintigeham, and that the same person should be brought back again, and when redeemed from slavery elected as a king,* over the Northumbrians.†

The command thus given was punctually fulfilled. Cuthred in the thirteenth year of the reign of king Alfred was crowned as a sovereign,‡ and the episcopal see which had formerly been established in the island of Lindisfarne, was transferred to Concester,§ formerly designated "Cunegecestria." By the desire of the same saint, as expressed to the abbot Eadred, it was declared that whosoever, forced by an urgent necessity, should fly to his relics, should be

---

F. Wigorn., p. 591. See M. West, p. 171, ad ann. 881. H. Hunt., p. 350.

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 335.

† *Chron. Mailros.*, p. 145. The same authority states that he reigned at York, whilst the dominions of Egbert were on the other side of the Tyne: "regnavit super Eboracum, Egbertus vero ultra Tinam." Cuthred thus became king of the Danes. See *Hist. S. Cuthbert.*, pp. 70, 71. S. Dunelm., *Hist. Reg. Ang.* p. 147.

‡ The manner in which he was to be invested with sovereignty over the Danes was thus prescribed by St. Cuthbert—"Et hora tertia legale precium, hora vero sexta duc eum ante totam multitudinem, ut eum regem eligant. Hora vero nona duc eum cum toto exercitu super montem qui vocatur Ospigedune, et *ibi pone in brachio dextro armillam auream et sic* omnes regem constituant." *Hist. S. Cuthbert.*, p. 70.

§ See Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. ix. p. 398.

permitted to enjoy unmolested peace for the space of a month.*

* "Ut quicumque ad ejus corpus fugeret in articulo necessitatis, pacem per mensem haberet." ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 336. "Præcipe illi præterea ut *Ecclesiam meam* tutum profugis locum refugii constituat, ut quicunque qualibet de causa ad meum corpus confugerit, pacem per triginta et septem dies, nulla unquam infringendam occasione habeat." S. DUNELM. *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 13, p. 22. "Et quicumque ad me confugerit, vel pro homicidis, vel pro aliqua necessitate, habeat pacem per 37 dies et noctes." *Hist. S. Cuthbert*, p. 71. This was the much-controverted and unjustly denounced right of sanctuary, (see vol. i. pp. 743, 744 of this work). In the laws of the Visigoths, many regulations are laid down with respect to the right, and as they illustrate the manner in which that right was exercised, we may here refer to them.

Where a homicide was committed and the perpetrator fled to the church, the priest, upon receiving the oath of the accuser that he would not put the criminal to death, might remove the guilty man from the altar and cast him outside the choir, when he was to become the slave of the relatives of the deceased, "in potestate parentum," and "excepto mortis periculo, quicquid de eo facere voluerint licentiam habeant." The reason for this law is stated in the preamble: "—se plerumque basilicarum Dei defensioni committant, qui contra divinum præceptum scelera perpetrare non metuunt." *Leg. Wisigoth*, lib. vi. tit. v. § xvi. No one should presume to withdraw a person from the church unless he had attempted to defend himself with arms, lib. ix. tit. iii. § i. A person flying to the porch of the church and not laying down his arms there, if killed in defending himself, the slayer was to be held harmless, lib. ix. tit. iii. § ii. A person taking his slave or debtor by violence from the altar, if holding superior rank, to pay 100s.—if in an inferior condition of life, 30s., and where not able to pay such fines, to receive 100 stripes, lib. ix. tit. iii. § iii. When a debtor fled for sanctuary to the altar, the priest was to make an arrangement as to the time that the debt should be paid, so that whilst taking care he should be saved from personal injury ("nequaquam cædere aut litigare eum presumat"), still the church not sanctioning the retention of another's property ("aliena tamen retineri non poterunt,") lib. ix. tit. iii. § iv. Amongst the Burgundians there was this law laid down as to sanctuary in cases of theft:—

"De his vero causis unde *hominem mori* jussimus si in Ecclesiam fugerit, *redimat se* secundum formam pretii constituti ab eo, cui

This regulation not only received the sanction of kings Alfred and Cuthred, but they also determined that it should be perpetually maintained. They moreover conceded as an augmentation of the income of the former see, that the entire lands between the Tyne and the Tees should be given to St. Cuthbert, and they doomed to the pains of everlasting punishment all who should become the profane violators of those rights, revenues, and privileges.*

---

furtum fecerit: et *inferat mucltæ nomine* solidos xii." Tit. lxx. de furtis, § ii.

That *sanctuary* did not mean *absolute impunity* from punishment for crime, we have the additional proof in the case of Ingo, who, having slain a Northman in the act of being baptised, immediately fled himself to the altar, "gladio projecto fugiens, sancti Marcialis aram complexus est;" and he did this for the purpose of securing sufficient time to give an explanation of the motives which had induced him to perpetrate such a deed, and not because he could thereby save his life,—"sed si occidor, ob regis primatumque salutem occisus, videbor." RICHER, lib. i. c. 10, 11. See also GRIMM, *Deutsche Rects Alterthumer*, pp. 886—892.

Upon the right of sanctuary in England, and the places enjoying such privileges, see DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. i. pp. 189, 275, 276, 358, 382., vol. ii. pp. 91, 92, 128, note c. 130, 131, 546; vol. iii. pp. 270, 306; vol. iv. pp. 52, 69; vol. v. p. 215; vol. vi. pp. 180, 680, 801, 1307, 1324.

* "—Et illius institutionis violatores pœnis infernalibus addiscerunt." ROG. DE WEND. These anathemas, intended to deter the wicked from the sacrilegeous spoliations of the property of the church and the poor, did not avail against the fell designs of an avaricious king in the sixteenth century. The decay or the misfortunes of the families that were enriched by these spoliations prove that they were not without their effect even in this world. Several specimens of these denunciations will be found in KEMBLE'S *Codex Diplomaticus*, vol. i. Preface, pp. lxv, lxvi, lxvii. Upon the donations to the see of Durham, see PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. pp. 486, 487, vol. ii. pp. cccxi, cccxiii. CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. pp. 349, 350 (Gough). HEARNE'S *Ductor Historicus*, pp. 376, 377, (ed. 1723). LELAND'S *Collectanea*, vol. ii. pp. 180, 181. ALFORD. *Annal. Ecc. Ang.*, vol. iii. pp. 151, 152, §. 2, 4.

Here it may be observed, that about this period of time the see of Hexham, through the spoliations and misdeeds of the Danes, ceased to exist.*

In the year 883,† Marinus who sat as pontiff for a period of seventeen months, at the request of king Alfred, rendered "the school of the English," at Rome, free from every tribute.‡ The pope also bestowed upon the English sovereign many gifts of transcendant value, and amongst the rest, a particle—and by no means a small one—of the saving cross, on which hung for the salvation of the world the son of God,§ a gift indeed! more welcome, more prized and more precious than the purest refined gold.‖ This self-same year, in accordance with a vow he had made at the time that a foreign and Pagan foe had been able to establish their winter quarters in the city of London, king Alfred sent a large gift to Rome to be distributed as alms, and another to the shrine of St. Thomas in India.¶ The bearers of the alms to Rome

---

* Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. pp. 335, 336. As to king Cuthred or Guthred, see S. Dunelm. *Hist. Eccles.*, p. 21, *Hist. S. Cuthbert*, pp. 70, 71, *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, p. 130, Rog. de Hoveden, pp. 418, 419.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 336.

§ Ibid.

‖ "Præterea munus omni obrizo pretiosius, partem Dominici ligni." W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 122. See S. Dunelm. *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, pp. 130, 148.

¶ "Alfredus autem misit eleemosynam suam Romæ, et etiam in Indiam ad Sanctum Thomam *secundum votum quod fecerat*, quando hostilis exercitus hyemavit apud Londoniam." H. Hunt. *Hist.*, lib. v. p. 350. This sending, by king Alfred, of alms-gifts to Rome and India, in accordance with a vow made at a period of distress, is a fact worthy of the consideration of the pious inhabit-

were Sighelm and Athelstan. They also carried his gifts to India to St. Thomas, and St. Bartholomew.* This mission, which penetrated far into India, was accomplished with a degree of success, which may be marvelled at even in the present day, and its happy results were proved in the rich display of gems of a strange and wondrous splendour, and of the sweet-scented liquid aromatic juices with which those distant lands abound.†

"And here" (observes the contemporary biographer of king Alfred) "may be inserted a few particulars, as far as they have come under my observation, of the life, the manners, the just bearing of my lord, Alfred, king of the West Saxons, subsequent to his marriage to the illustrious and pious Mercian princess, who has been referred to in a preceding part of this work."‡

---

ants of England. Perhaps, reflection may lead to the imitation of the best, and wisest of these kings. See as to gifts from Jerusalem to king Alfred, S. DUNELM, p. 131. ETHELRED. ABB. RIEVELLAN. *Geneal. Reg.* p. 355, and the contemporary witness Asser. "Nam etiam de Hierosolyma Abel patriarchæ epistolas et dono illi directas *vidimus et legimus.*" *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 17.

* *Sax. Chron.* "The apostle Thomas is reported to have preached the Gospel in India. Concerning the Christians of St. Thomas consult La Croze, Histoire du Christianisme des Indes, 2 vols. 12mo., La Haye, 1758. Their history was written by order of St. Augustin and has been translated into French." HARDY Notes on *William of Malmsbury*, vol. i. p. 187, note 1, (E.H.S). See BARONIUS. *Ann. Eccles.* vol. xv. ad ann. 883. § iii. pp. 388, 389. *Acta Sanctorum*, (Julii) vol. ii. *De S. Pantæno Confess.*, pp. 457, 461.

† W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 122. See R. DE DICET., p. 451. BROMTON, p. 812. THORN, p. 1777.

‡ "——Aliquantulum, quantum notitiæ meæ innotuerit, de vitâ et moribus, et æqua conversatione, atque ex parte non modica, res gestas domini mei Ælfredi Angulsaxonum regis postquam præfatam

The children of this marriage were first a daughter, the princess Æthelfleda, the second a son, Edward (the elder), the next the princess Æthelgeou, the fourth the princess Ælfrith, and the last the prince Æthelweard.* There were other children, but all removed from this life whilst they were mere infants.

Alfred's eldest daughter Æthelfleda, was united in marriage to Ethered, the ealdorman of the Mercians; but his second daughter Æthelgeou, consecrated herself to religion, took upon herself the service of the Lord, and became a nun.† The youngest son, by the will of Divine

---

ac venerabilem de Merciorum, nobilium genere conjugem duxerit." ASSER. *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 14. In introducing the interesting facts respecting Alfred which will be found in the text, we follow the plan laid down by William of Malmsbury, *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 121; ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 321, and other historians. The reader however will perceive at once that all could not have occurred in the year under which they are given, and he would fall into a mistake, if he supposed that others did so. See for instance as to GRIMBALD's *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. ii. pp. 652, 656, § viii, xxxi.

* ASSER. *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 13.

† Æthelgeofu quoque monasticæ vitæ regulis, devota Deo virginitate subjuncta et consecrata, divinum subiit servitium." ASSER. *Vit.*, p. 13.

"The next religious house that he (Alfred) founded was a nunnery or monastery of nuns, in his new city of Shaftsbury, at the east gate thereof. This he stored with nuns, most of whom were the daughters of noblemen; and over them he made his own daughter Æthelgeof the first abbess. These two religious houses" (Athelney and Shaftesbury), "he so well endowed, as that though it appeareth not how many persons were of the foundation, yet were not their revenues less than full eight parts of his own yearly revenues, which he assigned to their particular maintenance. Afterwards he also built a religious house of nuns in Winchester." SPELMAN's *Life of Alfred*, book iii. § xiv p. 167, see DUGDALE's *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 472, 476.

Providence, and through the admirable foresight of the king, devoted himself to the study of letters. He was carefully educated by competent teachers in common with nearly all the children of the nobility of the kingdom, and with many even of those who had no claim to the rank of nobility.* In the school in which the prince and all these young persons were taught, books in both languages, that is in the Latin language and the Saxon tongue, were read with great assiduity. Thus did they in their childhood devote themselves to the attainment of learning, so that

---

* "——et etiam multis ignobilibus, sub diligenti magistrorum cura traditus est. In qua schola utriusque linguæ libri, &c." ASSER. *Vit.* p. 13. It cannot be denied that this mode of proceeding exhibits no desire to debar the humbler classes of society of the benefits of education. Thus in the capitulary of Louis le Debonnaire, we find this direction given —

"Scholæ sane ad filios et ministros Ecclesiæ instruendos vel edocendos, sicut nobis *præterito tempore* ad Attiniacum promisistis, et vobis injunximus, in congruis locis, ubi necdum perfectum est, ad multorum utilitatem et profectum a vobis ordinari non negligantur," *Capit Ludov. Pii.* ann. 822. § v. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vi p. 431.

With this may be conjoined the decree of the much abused pope, Alexander III., in the year 1179, "———ne pauperibus qui parentum opibus juvari non possunt, legende et proficiendi opportunitas subtrahatur, per unamque ecclesiam cathredalem magistro, qui *clericos* ejusdem ecclesiæ, et *scholares pauperes gratis doceat*, competens aliquod beneficium assignetur quo docentis necessitas subleveter, et discentibus via pateat ad doctrinam." LABBEUS, *Concilia*, vol. xviii. p. 1518.

In giving this last extract it is to be hoped, that no half-learned person may, as a proof of the desire of the pope to instruct the poor and ignorant, translate the "*clericos*" into "clergymen." The word is used here, as we find it employed by the monk of St. Gall, when describing the humble servitor of a church in the time of Charlemagne—"unum *clericum* subtus altare celatum—quidam coccio derasus, insulsus et insaniens linea tantum et femoralibus indutus." *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. v. p. 129.

before their bodies had gained sufficient strength for manly exercises, such as are deemed requisite in the practises of the chace, and of other like arts and accomplishments necessary to be known by those of exalted state, their minds were imbued and their intellects brightened by the study and acquirement of the liberal sciences.

As to Edward and Ælfrith they were brought up within the precincts of the royal court. They were never separated from it, and an unceasing care was bestowed upon them by their masters and mistresses. These royal children won the love of all, of strangers as well as of their countrymen, by their humility, their affability, and their meekness; and whilst they acquired the knowledge and the practice of all those things which were indispensible to them in their exalted position, they were not permitted to pass by either inattentively or idly, that which might be esteemed book-learning or intellectual proficiency.* Psalms, and Saxon books, and Saxon poems, were especially studiously learned by them; and whatever was to be thus acquired, was sometimes attained by oral recitation, but most frequently from written works.

Meanwhile the king, although entangled in many wars, embarrassed by the ever-recurring difficulties of his position, with the invasions of Pagans to repel, the daily infirmities of his body to endure, and the entire government of a kingdom to control, to check, and to superintend, did still contrive not merely to see that all matters pertaining to the chace were attended to, but he also saw

---

* "——nec etiam illi sine liberali disciplina inter cætera presentis vitæ studia; quæ nobilibus conveniunt otiose et incuriose permittuntur." ASSER.

that those who had the care of his falcons, his hawks, and his hounds, performed their duty, and when occasion required, taught them how to do it—and not only did he teach them, but also his goldsmiths, and all other kinds of artisans, so that he was able to erect, and in accordance with his own plans and contrivance, edifices which far exceed those of his predecessors in design, in grandeur, and in execution. And doing these things he was unceasing in his study of Saxon works, and especially endeavoured to commit to memory Saxon poems; whilst he enjoined upon others that as a duty, which he to the utmost of his powers performed as a task. He was too most diligent in his devotions—he daily heard mass, recited psalms and prayers, the holy hours and nocturns—and even in the night time, and without the knowledge of his attendants, was in the habit of visiting churches, in order that he might, in such places, offer up his pious aspirations.* He was so bounteous in his alms-giving, that he might be considered, in his bestowal of them, as animated with an intense love for the helpless amongst his own subjects, and the destitute of all nations.† He who was distinguished by a matchless affability and

* "Divina quoque ministeria et missam scilicet, quotidie audire psalmos quosdam, et orationes, et horas divinas, et nocturnas celebrare, et Ecclesias nocturno tempore, ut diximus orandi causa clam a suis adire solebat, et frequentabat." Asser, *Vit.*, p. 13.

† The unceasing charity and benevolence of king Alfred are gratefully commemorated by the monkish historians. We cannot refrain from quoting the expressions used by one of them:—

"Tunc pauperes jubilando exultabant; tunc orphani et viduæ nimio gaudio cordis applaudebant. Noverat illud scolastici. 'Tunc est preciosa pecunia cum translata fuerit in alios; largiendi usu desinit possideri.'" S. Dunelm., *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, p. 132. See Ethelred. Abb. Rieval., *Geneal*, p. 353.

pleasantness in demeanour to all who came within his presence, was also a ceaseless inquirer into all matters that appeared strange, or had previously been unknown to him.

Many Franks, Fresons, Gauls, Pagans, Welsh, Scots, and Armoricans—men of high ranks, as well as of low degree, adopted him as their sovereign lord; and all were treated by him as if they were his own countrymen; each and all according to their respective stations, were loved, honoured, enriched, exalted.

He was untiringly attentive to the reading of the Divine Scriptures, whether that task were performed by persons of his own land, or, if it should so chance, that they were expounded to him by foreigners, and he was alike eager and solicitous to unite with them in prayer.*

---

* "Divinam quoque scripturam a recitantibus indigenis, aut etiam, si casu quodam aliunde adveniret; cum alienigenis pariter preces audire sedulus et solicitus solebat." ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 13. In the case of Alfred, we have another proof of how wrongfully the Catholics have been accused of wishing to prevent the reading of the Scriptures. Here a Catholic bishop states the fact, as being as much to the honour of Alfred, that he was "sedulus et solicitus" in Bible reading, as that he heard mass every day, was a builder of monasteries, and bountiful to the poor. This respect and veneration for the Bible was not confined to the English Prince Alfred. We have documentary proof of the veneration for it of Alfred's contemporary, Charles the Bald. Amongst other lines written upon a copy of the Holy Scriptures magnificently decorated by Charles, were the following:—

Biblorum seriem Karolus rex inclitus istam
Contexit cryso corde colens catharo.
* * * *
Quid de Evangelico textu replicabo colendo?
En ipsos apices gemmis circumdat et auro.
O quanto Christum mens fervida diligit ista!
Cujus amore sibi vilescunt omnia mundi.
* * * *

His bishops, as well as all who were in holy orders; his ealdormen and his thanes; his public officers and his personal attendants he loved, with an exceeding great love. Even their children who were nurtured with the royal family, he bestowed on them as much affectionate tenderness as if they were his own offspring; for he never ceased to bestow his care in having them imbued with virtuous principles, and well instructed in letters.

Thus did he pass his time, and yet it was, as if he found no consolation in all these things; or as if no outward calamity and no inward grief could afflict him; and all this because of a single sorrow, for which he prayed to the Lord, and with respect to which he alone sighed and complained to those who were on the most affectionate terms of friendly intimacy with him. The single sorrow was this, that the Almighty God had been pleased to make him ignorant of Divine wisdom, and of the liberal arts. And in so thinking he might be likened unto the pious, most famous, and most wealthy Solomon, king of the Jews, who despising temporal glory and riches, asked God alone for wisdom, and so asking obtained both wisdom and temporal glory, as it is written, "Seek ye therefore first the "kingdom, and his justice, and all these things shall be "added unto you." But God, who is the ever attentive watcher of the very innermost recesses of the mind, and

---

Felix ergo manus, sed mens feliciter hujus
Pauper quæ potius secum quin constat egena,
Non inflata tumens regalis stemmate typi.
Sed caro dum gemmis auroque ornata refulget,
Hæc semper meditatur nocteque dieque.
Lucidior Christo quo sole resplendeat ipso.

See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 313.

of its meditations, and at the same time the Inspirer of its virtuous inclinations, nay, Who is also the bountiful Dispenser of pious desires; and Who never has instigated any one to wish for that which was good, and that it would be right and just to concede to him, Who has not bountifully bestowed it; thus also inspired the mind of Alfred, interiorly, and not by exterior circumstances, or as the Scripture expresses it, "I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me." That which he wanted was to have those who could aid him in carrying out the object of his pious meditation—who might assist him in gaining the wisdom he desired to possess, and in attaining the knowledge of which he longed to be the master. The course that he pursued was that of a sagacious bee, which springing from its tiny cherished cell in the summer's earliest dawn, wings its rapid flight through the unknown pathless regions of the air, seeks out the flowers, however numerous and different they may be, whether of plant, or shrub, or tree, tries the flavour of each, and brings back to its hive that alone which is the most sweet and most odorous. Thus did king Alfred: he cast his views abroad—he sought exteriorly, for that which he had not interiorly—that is within his own kingdom. And God was then pleased to afford some consoling assistance to the benevolent desires of the king—as if his kindly and well founded complaint were no longer to remain unattended to—for there were sent to the king those who might be esteemed as great lights of learning. For instance, Heaven sent to king Alfred, Werefrith, bishop of Worcester,* a clergy-

* An accurate account of this eminent and learned prelate will be found in the *Anglia Sacra*, vol. i. pp. 471, 472, note *n*. *Ann. Eccles. Wigorn.*, ad ann. 872. PITSEUS, p. 171.

man thoroughly informed in Divine learning, and who, at the desire of the king, translated for the first time from Latin into the Saxon language the books of dialogues of Pope Gregory and his disciple Peter—a work in which the sense and meaning conveyed in one language were clearly and elegantly rendered into another. The next person that came was Plegmund, the archbishop of Canterbury, by birth a Mercian, a truly venerable and wise man.* The next were Athelstan and Werwulf, priests and chaplains, both Mercians and both great scholars.

These four were invited by Alfred to come from Mercia, and all were exalted by him in the kingdom of the West Saxons to the highest honors and privileges it was in the power of a monarch to bestow—they had from him all things, and we may even include in these Plegmund's archiepiscopal and Werefreth's episcopal titles in Mercia. In their society, the desire of the king for the possession of wisdom and learning seemed as incessantly to increase, as it was constantly gratified. Day and night, whenever he could spare a moment from his other indispensible duties, he had these to read out of books for him. He was never unaccompanied by some one amongst them, and hence it came to pass that he gained a knowledge of all kinds of books, although thus unaided he could not

---

* The character of Archbishop Plegmund is thus briefly but clearly drawn by Simeon of Durham:

"His temporibus fideliter glorioseque regimine rexit Ecclesiam Christi Plegmundus archiepiscopus, qui venerandus vir sapientiæ fructibus renidebat, præditus bis binis columpnis, justitiæ videlicet, prudentiæ, temperantiæ, fortitudinis." *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, p. 131. See *Ang. Sac.*, vol. i. pp. 4, 99, 554, &c.

comprehend them, for there were some of them that he had not yet learned how to read.*

In the acquisition of learning he exhibited a right royal, most commendable, and ever grateful spirit of avarice—he sought to accumulate his knowledge by every fair and just means, and he sent, amongst other places, ambassadors to France to procure teachers. From thence it was that he invited Grimbald, the priest and monk—a person eminently entitled to veneration—a perfect master of singing—most learned in every species of ecclesiastical discipline as well as of the Holy Scriptures—a man too adorned with every virtue.† There was also amongst

---

* That is, books in Latin language, which he had not then learned. "He, at first, required the extracts to be explained to him in English; his next step was to study the Latin grammar; and having mastered that, he proceeded to read, with the aid of his masters, books written in the Latin tongue, and at last ventured to present himself to his subjects in the capacity of author and translator for their information and improvement." LINGARD'S *History and Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 240.

† As to this great scholar, and glorious saint—Grimbald, see *Acta Sanctorum* (Julii,) vol. ii. pp. 651, 658. BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. pp. 33, 34. BARONIUS, vol. xv. pp. 337, 534, 535, 536, 537. ALFORD. *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. pp. 127, 128. HARPSFIELD, *Nov. Sæc.*, c. 10, pp. 169, 170. TURNER'S *Hist. of Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 15, 16. It is stated of him, that when prior of the abbey of St. Bertin, in the town of St. Omers, that he "made a brave stand against the attempts of Baldwin the Bald, earl of Flanders, who would have intruded himself upon the convent *in quality of abbot*." *Britannia Sancta*, vol. ii. p. 27. The manner in which he received the viaticum and prepared himself for death are alike worthy of being recorded:—

"Cum autem hinc migraturus, ad *dominici corporis* salutare viaticum se movere præ ægritudine non posset, forti tamen nisu, se ipso fortior, sese erexit, et *Christo advenienti* in faciem se prostravit. A fratribus autem petiit solus per triduum relinqui, ut iter suum pararet." *Act. Sanct.* (Julii,) vol. ii. p. 658, § 38.

those teachers a monk and priest named John, an individual possessing a particularly acute mind, most accomplished in all kinds of literature, and thoroughly skilled in a vast variety of arts.* By means of these the wisdom of the king was increased, his knowledge enlarged, and

---

* Dr. Lingard in his "*History and Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*," vol. ii. pp. 246, 247, note 1, shows that this monk and priest is not to be confounded with the celebrated Irish scholar Joannes Scotus Erigena, who had distinguished himself by his wit and profound learning in the court of Charles the Bald. "I see no good reason," observes Dr. Lingard, "to affirm that Scotus ever came to England, and much less to believe that he was honored with the friendship of Alfred. A story respecting him is told by several of our chroniclers; by Simeon (*De Reg.* p. 148), Hoveden (f. 240), Wendover (i. 339), and Westminster (p. 171); but it is evident that they all copy from Malmsbury, *De Reg.* i, 189, 190, and *Vit. Aldhel. in Anglia Sacra*, ii. 26." We may here remark, that in addition to what here is specified, Wm. of Malmsbury repeats the same statement as to Joannes Scotus Erigena, in his *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 45, lib. v. pp. 360, 361. In his "History of the Kings of England," Malmsbury is particular in stating that the monk John, of Old Saxony, was made abbot in Athelney—"ibique abbatem Johannem constituit, ex antiqua Saxonia oriundum"—(*Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 122, vol. i. p. 188, E. H. S.,) whilst of John Scot Erigena his words are, "hoc tempore *creditur* fuisse Johannes Scottus, &c." Ibid. p. 189.) See HARDY's notes on Wm. of Malmsbury, vol. i. p. 188, note 1; BARONIUS, vol. xv., pp. 337, 338, § 29, Pagi. We are not to be much surprised that this confusion should exist as to the monk "John of Old Saxony," and "John Scot Erigena," when we find, that there existed a belief as to two Grimbalds, see *Acta Sanctorum* (Julii,) vol. ii. pp. 653, 656, § 16, 30; and the historian Asser has been confounded with another Asser, bishop of Sherborne, who died in the year 883, and even his precise position is much disputed. See ROG. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 336. ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. pp. 159, 160, § 7, 8, 9. WRIGHT'S *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, vol. i. pp. 405, 406. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 69, 70. TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 13, 14. LELAND, *Collectanea*, vol. i. p. 18, vol. ii. p. 250. HEARNE'S notes on SPELMAN'S *Life of Alfred*, p. 136, note 2, and p. 196, note 1.

his mind accomplished whilst his teachers were endowed with great power, and enriched with splendid gifts.*

---

* Asser, *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 13, 14. The author Asser, here adds with respect to himself; "about this time I also upon the invitation of the king travelled from the most western and distant boundaries of Britain, to the West Saxon kingdom." He states that he was accompanied by some of the leading nobility of Alfred, and that he first saw the monarch in Sussex, in his royal villa of Dene—that he was most graciously received, and urged by Alfred to devote himself to his majesty's service; that he declined for many reasons to comply with this request, and could not, unless under actual compulsion, accede to it, "nisi coactus et compulsus." That he was then requested to remain half the year in England—and that with the assent of his community he determined upon complying with this request, as it was hoped that the power of Alfred would preserve the monastery and diocese of Saint David, from the assaults of a Welsh prince named Hemeid, by whom both had been spoliated. "Sperabant enim nostri, minores tribulationes ex injurias et parte Hemeid regis sustinere: qui sæpe deprædabatur illud monasterium et parochiam Sancti Degui." Asser then adds that in accordance with the arrangement made between them, he went to the court of Alfred at the royal villa at Leonaford, where he was received with every mark of honour, and remained for eight months, during which time he read for the king, whatever books they could command, "for this was his peculiar and constant habit, by night and by day, and whatever were the afflictions of his mind, or the infirmities of his body, either to read books himself or to have them read for him." "Nam hæc est propria et usitatissima illius consuetudo die noctu inter omnia alia mentis et corporis impedimenta, aut per se ipsum libros recitare; aut aliis recitantibus audire." Asser proceeds to say, that it was not without great difficulty, and many solicitations that the king could be induced to assent to his departure for Wales—that before doing so, he attended Alfred, at his request, at an early hour on the vigil of Christmas day, when the king presented him with two documents, "duas epistolas," containing an account of all the property belonging to the two monasteries of Ambresbury and Banwell—that these monasteries were given to him, and along with them a most valuable pallium of silk, and a mass of incense, so large that it would require a strong man to carry it; the king at the same time thus expressing himself:—In

In the year 885,* the accursed army of the Pagans divided into two great military bodies, advanced the one against France, and the other returned to Kent for the purpose of laying siege to the city of Rochester.† They

---

offering to you these small things, do not suppose that I am unwilling hereafter to give you greater"—"non ideo dedisse parva illa quod sequenti tempore nollet dare majora." "And at a subsequent period of time," adds Asser, "he did most unexpectedly bestow upon me Exeter, with the entire diocese appertaining to it, both in Cornwall and the West Saxon kingdom, not to mention his daily and innumerable gifts of all kinds of worldly wealth; but that I do not here particularise lest I should weary the reader, and yet which I do not refer to from any motive of vain glory as far as I am myself concerned, nor through any impulse of adulation, towards the king, as if I were seeking higher honours from him by mentioning those that have already been bestowed upon me. God is my witness I am actuated by no such feelings. I solely mention facts, for the benefit of those who otherwise might be ignorant of them, and in order that the world may be aware of the profuseness of his generosity." Asser, *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 14, 15. "Asser," remarks Dr. Lingard, was "a member (probably one of the chorepiscopi) of the church of St. David's." *History and Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 247. See Dodd's *History of the Church*, vol. i. p. 57. (Tierney's *Edition.*) Vossius, *Histor. Latin.*, lib. ii. c. 39, p. 317.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 339. The course which this particular host of Northmen pursued is traced with manifest interest in the old annalists. Thus in the *Saxon Chronicle* we have the following notice respecting it. "A.D. 883. This year went the army up the Scheldt to Conde, and there sat a year." "A.D. 884. This year went the army up the Somme to Amiens, and there sat a year." "A.D. 885. This year separated *the before mentioned* army in two: one part went to the east, another to Rochester." Asser. *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 11, gives the circumstances here mentioned under the date of the year 884, and his expressions are the same as those used in the *Saxon Chronicle*, "præfatus exercitus." It is said by Ethelwerd, "unam ad Lofenum alteram at Hrofecestre partem videlicet pertinentem obsederuntque oppida prædicta," lib. iv. c. 3, p. 845.

invested the city with their troops and established before it a fortress for their own defence.* In their efforts to reduce this place the Northmen utterly failed; for the citizens of Rochester defended themselves bravely until King Alfred accompanied by a large army was enabled to come to their relief. The sudden arrival of the king cast the invaders into such confusion, that in their hurry to make good their retreat to their ships, they not only abandoned all the horses they had brought with them from France, but even an immense number of their prisoners, who were confined in the fortress they had erected, and who did not for a moment attempt to maintain it against the arms of Alfred. The West Saxons immediately seized upon the prisoners and the horses of the Northmen, who fled this summer from England to France.†

This same year King Alfred fitted out his fleet on the coast of Kent and sent it to scour the seas bordering upon the East Anglian territory, for the purpose of encountering the piratical war-ships of the Northmen. This fleet upon reaching the mouth of the Stour was on the instant encountered by thirteen of the war-equipped Pagans' ships. A naval engagement took place—both sides fought with desperate valour, until at last every man of the Pagans was killed; and all the ships, and the treasures of coin contained in them, were captured. The victorious royal fleet was lulled into a false security by success,‡ for the Pagan inhabitants of East Anglia collecting, wherever they could, a number of ships, intercepted the king's fleet in

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 11.

‡ "Victrix regia classis dormiret." ASSER.

the open sea, at the mouth of the Stour,* and in the battle that then took place inflicted upon it a signal defeat.† Thus did the Danes in East Anglia break the truce into which they had entered with King Alfred.‡

In the year 886, the city of London, the buildings of which had been destroyed by fire, and its citizens slaughtered by invaders, was restored to its former glory, its noble buildings again erected, and its streets filled anew with inhabitants through the munificence and the care of its sovereign Alfred. Upon the restoration of London, its control and government was entrusted by Alfred to his son-in-law Ethered the ealdorman of the Mercians. At the same time all the Angles and Saxons, who had previously been either dispersed over the country as fugitives, or had been held in bondage by the Pagans, came of their own accord to Alfred, and acknowledged him as the supreme monarch of the land.§ The English felt proud in submitting to him—they rejoiced to declare as their lord the man who had asserted the rights and vindicated the liberty of their country.‖

---

* "Hearne shows that Spelman was mistaken in supposing this to have been the river Stoure, in Kent, and agrees with Lambard in fixing the spot at what is now called Harwich haven." Coxe notes on Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 339, note 6. (E. H. S.)

† Asser., *Vit.* p. 11.

‡ *Sax. Chron.* 885.

§ Asser., *Vit.* p. 15. The *Saxon Chronicle* states that Alfred this year fortified the city of London, and that the whole of the English nation, with exception of those subjected to the Danes, returned to their allegiance. See ad ann. 886.

‖ "Volentes etiam Angli, in ejus potestatem concesserant, gaudentes se talem virum edidisse; qui posset illos in libertatem evehere." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii.

It was in the year of our Lord 886, and the second year from the arrival of St. Grimbald in England the University of Oxford was instituted.* Those who devoted themselves to the study of divinity had as their teacher a pre-eminent doctor in theology, the holy abbot, Neot, and as his assistant, the holy Grimbald, a most admirable professor of biblical learning.† The teaching of grammar and rhetoric was confided to the priest and monk Asser, a man of profound knowledge in all that pertains to literature. Dialectics, music and arithmetic were lectured upon by John, a monk of St. David's monastery; whilst geometry and astronomy were taught by John the monk,‡ who had as his colleague in these departments that extremely clever, and universally learned man, the pious Grimbald. These labored for the benefit of priests and people under the protection of the ever glorious and invincible king Alfred, whose memory should be, as honey is in the mouth, ever sweet and grateful to the great bulk of mankind.§

This most prudent sovereign promulgated a Doom, which was to this effect, that his thanes, when they had

---

* *Annales Wintonienses* as quoted by Alford, vol. iii. p. 165, § 9.

† "—Incepta est Universitas Oxoniæ; primitus in eadem regentibus, ac in theologia legentibus; sancto Neotho Abbate, necnon in theologia doctore egregio; et sancto Grimbaldo, sacræ paginæ suavissimæ dulcedinis, excellentissimo professore." *Ann. Winton.* See RUDBORN, *Hist. Mag.* lib. iii. c. 6, p. 207.

‡ We may presume the monk John of old Saxony, mistaken by so many authors for John Scot Erigena. See p. 229, in this volume. As to these professors, see SPELMAN'S *Life of Alfred*, book iii. § 66, pp. 195, 196.

§ "— Præsente gloriosissimo et invictissimo Rege Alfredo, cujus in omni ore, quasi mel, indulcabitur memoria." *Annal. Winton.*

sons, or if they had them not, then *their slaves*, that is, such as evinced they were gifted with genius and talents, *should be made free, and devoted to the study of letters.**

---

* *Annal. Winton*, as quoted by ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 165, § 9. The words in which are identified the labours of monks, with the promotion of learning, and the emancipation of slaves, are worthy of being quoted in the original: "Ubi idem Rex prudentissimus Alfredus, tale decretum edidit; videlicet, ut optimates sui, filios suos; vel si filios non haberent, saltem *servos suos*, si ingenio pollerent, *concessa libertate, literis commendarent.*" See BROMTON *Chron.*, p. 814.

We intentionally avoid here entering into the disputed question as to the relative claims of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to greater antiquity. It will be found already alluded to in the first volume of this work, pp. 251, 252, note * and p. 294, note †, and p. 368, note ‡. It is sufficient to remark that it involved the reputation of Mr. Camden, the antiquarian, who has been charged with an interpolation, in his edition of ASSER. (*Anglica Normanica, Hibernica, Cambrica*, cura Camdeni, p. 16.) See COLLIER'S *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. pp. 394, 395. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 72, 73, note 4. Upon the dispute between Oxford and Cambridge, see TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 155 to 157, note 42. CAMDEN'S *Britannica*, vol. ii. pp. 5, 6, 211 to 213, and for a vast mass of antiquarian research on this subject, the reader is referred to SPELMAN'S *Life of Alfred*, by HEARNE, pp. 144, 171, 177, 195. HEARNE'S *Ductor Historicus*, book iii. pp. 291, 292.

In this year is placed by Alford an account of a council held in London, which was especially remarkable for the address of St. Grimbald to king, nobles and commonalty, which was attended by the happiest effects—a perverse population recognizing their sins, and seeking an amendment for them in a hearty repentance and a sincere confession; or to use the words of the Annals of Winchester—"et in confessione malorum, et in emendatione perversorum, in recordatione infernalium tormentorum, et in temperantia cibi et potus, et in abstinentia epularum diversarum, calcanda monstranda cuncta phantasmata corporis, et incorporaliter tenere gaudia paradisi." See ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Ang.* vol. iii. pp. 163 to 165, § 2 to 7. HARPSFIELD, *Hist. Eccles. Ang. Nov. Sæc.* c. 7. p. 164.

In the year 887, the West Saxons and their king Alfred sent through the hands of the ealdorman Ethelhem, their alms (allmes) to Rome.*

It was, in this year that king Alfred, under a Divine impulse, began, for the first time, and on the same day, to read and to translate from a foreign language into his own.†

"I shall explain" (says his biographer Asser) "how this "circumstance took place. Upon a certain day, we were "both, in the royal palace, when we were conversing toge- "ther as usual, and I happened to repeat to him a passage "out of book. The king paid great attention to the quo- "tation I had made, he wished to reflect upon, and con- "sider it well, and therefore he took from his bosom a "book, which he always carried about with him, and in "which were inscribed his daily devotions, some of the "psalms, and a few prayers which he had recited from his "youth upwards,‡, and he desired me to write down in it "the quotation which I had orally cited. * * * Upon "looking at the king's book I could discover no vacant "space on which I could write the passage referred to; "for the book was quite filled up with many such things— "hence I was prevented from yielding an immediate com- "pliance with the wishes of the king; and hence too it "occurred to me that I might incite his majesty to the "study and the knowledge of works which might be re-

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† ASSER. *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 16.

‡ "Libellum——in quo diurnus cursus, et psalmi quidam atque orationes quædam, quas ille in juventute sua legerat, scripti habebantur."—ASSER.

"garded of a more holy character than that to which I had "alluded. I then said, upon his majesty pressing me to "write down the passage, that perhaps it might be his "pleasure that I should do so on some separate leaves of "parchment; as we did not know but other quotations "might be made, which he might desire to have inscribed. "His majesty approved of this idea; and I therefore joy- "fully prepared a collection of parchments;* and com- "menced my task by noting down not only the passage, "which had attracted the king's attention, but in the "same day two others that had obtained his approbation. "* * *. As soon as the first quotation had been written "fairly out, his majesty sat himself down to study it; to "read it first in the original language, and then to trans- "late it into the Saxon tongue; and the study of this pas- "sage was followed by that of many others.* * * Thus "did this king, impelled by the Divine impulse, commence "on the festival of St. Martin, to begin learning the rudi- "ments of the sacred writings, and to gather together "from his teachers, those flowers of literature which were "all incorporated by him within the borders of a single "book, and this book at length swelled out, by various con- "tributions, to the size of a psalter. He wished it to be "called his 'Enchiridion,' that is his 'hand-book,' be- "cause he always had it in his hand, or close beside him, "at all times, and at all hours, and from it, he affirmed, he "was wont to derive no slight relief, and no small conso- "lation."†

---

* See DUCANGE, *in verb.* "Quaternio."

† ASSER. *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 16, 17. These marks (* * *) notify to the reader where passages to be found in the original are omitted. As to the books translated by Alfred, see PITSEUS, pp. 170, 171.

In the year 888,* king Alfred commanded the bishops of the English people, as well as all other persons devoted to a religious life to collect the alms of the faithful, and when collected to transmit them to Rome and Jerusalem. The king, at the same time, bestowed no small contribution from his own treasury, which, added to the alms of his subjects, were sent to the places he had previously indicated.†

And here, we may remark, that it is not proper to pass by unnoticed the fulfilment by the king of those intentions that were formed in his constant and pious meditations, and to which he adhered alike whether in the enjoyment of prosperity, or when visited by adversity.‡ The king pondering upon his spiritual destitution, and upon those blessings and graces by which it might be best supplied, determined upon the construction of two monasteries.§ One of these he resolved should be a monastery for monks, and the place he selected for its establishment was at Athelney.‖

In instituting this monastery, the monarch found amongst his own subjects no male person of noble rank,

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 354. The *Saxon Chronicle* states that the person who brought the alms to Rome was the ealdorman "Beeke."

‡ Asser. *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 18.

§ "Nam cum de necessitate animæ suæ solito cogitaret, inter cætera diuturna et nocturna bona, quibus assidue et maxime studebat, duo monasteria construere imperavit."—Asser.

‖ We omit here the description given by the author of the locality selected for the new monastery.

nor of free birth—if we except infants who knew not how either to refuse what is good, nor reject what is bad—who was willing to take upon himself the monastic life. The desire for such a state had during the course of many preceding years completely disappeared not only amongst the West Saxons, but many other nations; and this although there still remained standing a great number of monasteries. Notwithstanding this, the rules of regular discipline were not adhered to; and we know not wherefore, unless we may attribute it to the invasion of foreigners, who so very frequently and constantly assailed the inhabitants by sea, and overran the land, or, that there was such an abundance of wealth amongst the people, that they looked down with contempt upon the poverty of a monastic life. Hence it was that the king had to endeavour and congregate within the walls of his monastery monks of different nations, over whom he appointed as their first abbot the priest and monk, John of old Saxony.

Albeit that the king had procured some priests and deacons from places beyond the seas, still as he had not a sufficient number, he purchased a great many slaves from the Gallic nation, whose children he directed to be educated in this monastery, in order that in the course of time they might be worthy to wear the monastic habit.*

---

* Comparavitque etiam quamplurimos ejusdem gentis Gallicæ, ex quibus quosdam infantes in eodem monasterio edoceri imperavit, et subsequenti tempore ad monachicum habitum sublevari."—Asser. He adds that he saw in the same monastery a young person originally a Pagan, who wore the monastic habit, and was regarded as no mean scholar by his fellow students. This passage is deserving of notice, as shewing that in this as so many other instances, religion aided in mitigating the evils of slavery; next, that the per-

In this monastery a frightful crime was perpetrated, which, if we could, we would willingly consign to oblivion. * * * A certain priest and a deacon, both of the Gallic nation, and both moved by the spirit of the devil, which stirred up in their hearts a feeling of secret envy against the aforesaid abbot, were carried so far by their animosity that they resolved, Judas-like, to betray and destroy their superior. For this purpose they hired two Gallican slaves, who were under their directions, to enter the church at night, when all the community were buried in repose; and then having closed the doors behind them, to wait there the coming of the abbot, who was sure to be alone, as it was his constant practice, and then when he was on his bended knees before the holy altar, to rush suddenly upon and slay him, and afterwards to drag the lifeless body, and lay it before the door of a harlot, so that it might seem that he, who had been killed in prayer, had been slain in sin.

Such was their wicked plot, and so, as it is said, "sin was added to sin," and "the last state" of these persons was "made worse than the first."

Through the Divine mercy the impious project was in its most material point frustrated; and all was not permitted to occur, as they had concocted and contrived it. Upon the appointed night the two base villains each well armed, shut themselves up in the church and awaited the coming of the abbot. At night the abbot John came

---

sons purchased as slaves by king Alfred were Pagans, that is Northmen captured in war, by the Franks; thirdly, that the noble revenge which king Alfred took upon this pestilent race of invaders was, by converting them to Christianity; and lastly, that this the greatest of English kings was most solicitous for the revival and extension of monasteries throughout England.

according to usual custom alone, and as he supposed unknown to any one else, to pray in the church—he entered—proceeded to the altar, and there fell on his knees, when instantly his assailants, with drawn swords, rushed forward and inflicted several wounds upon him. He, however, who was at all times quick, vigilant, and active, (and as it was said by some persons, not altogether unacquainted with military life, although he had devoted his days to a better discipline than that to be acquired in a camp;) as soon as he heard the clatter made by the footsteps of armed men, rose from his knees before he saw them, boldly faced them, and previous to his being mortally wounded, shouted out loudly—struggled against them even whilst he was in his agony—his piercing shrieks denouncing the assault made on him as that of "demons," for he never said "they were men." He never supposed they could be men, who would do a deed so sacrilegious and so vile. He was, however, wounded to death before his friends could come to his aid.

The monks awakened by the noise, and hearing the word "demons" distinctly mentioned, and not knowing what had occurred, were confounded with fear, as they ran about seeking for the cause of all this clamour, until they at length reached the doors of the church. Amongst them, on this occasion, were the Judas-like betrayers of their master.

Before the monks could reach the church, the assassins had fled from it, and found a place of temporary safety in the pathless fens that surrounded the monastery. The body of the abbot, who was now nearly dead, was abandoned by them in the church. It was there discovered by the monks; and amidst the bitter tears and the loud moans of the community, the still breathing body of their vene-

rable superior was carried by them from the church back to his own cell.

The innocent regarded this as a doleful event; and the wicked were made to feel that they had been guilty of an unpardonable crime; for, through the mercy of God, so base and foul a deed was not permitted to remain unpunished. The villains who had perpetrated the crime, and the individuals who had instigated them to it, were discovered, arrested, and by an ignominious and painful death cut off from the number of the living.*

---

* Asser, *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 18, 19. Such was the death of John of Saxony in a monastery. Another monk was assassinated at Malmsbury by the boys he was teaching, having been stabbed to death by their styli, "apud monasterium nostrum a pueris quos docebat graphiis." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 122. The author declares that this was John Scot Erigena. "Was not the event stated in Asser," it is asked by Dr. Lingard, "the origin of the story told by Malmsbury of the John buried in his church having been murdered by the boys whom he taught?" *History and Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 262, note 1. The answer to such a question must be—that there is great probability that it was; but whether we suppose that two such crimes were committed about the same period in two monasteries, or that we believe that only one such was perpetrated, still in either case we have the proof of a lamentable decay of piety in England—and that, as we conceive, distinctly attributable to the utter disorganization of society produced by the murderous and devastating career of the Northmen. Amongst the first attempts of the good king Alfred to replace society on its former basis, was the re-establishment of monasteries, conducted on strict rules of discipline. In every age of christianity we find the same effort made by popes, by good bishops, by pious priests, and by virtuous kings; and whenever abuses have crept into the church, endeavouring to reform them. It is not improbable but that John of Old Saxony was one of the many martyrs of the church, and that he was put to death because he desired to enforce the strict rules of discipline in the monastery confided to his care. (See on this point, *Vit. S. Norbert*, c. 2, § 12, 13. *Vit. B. Menwerc*, c. 9, § 74. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii,) vol. ii. pp. 536, 824. As monasticism declined, and

The second monastery, which king Alfred caused to be built, was erected at the eastern gate of Shaftesbury.* It was intended for nuns, and as soon as it had been completed and rendered habitable, he placed in it as abbess his own daughter Æthelgeou. This maiden, who had devoted herself to God, had as her associate nuns in the same monastery many dames of noble rank, who took with her the monastic vows, and led with her a monastic life.†

These two monasteries were endowed by Alfred with several estates, and with riches of every kind.‡

The king having thus completed the two objects he had in view, he next considered how he could give a greater effect and render more permanent and secure in operation his pious intentions. He wished that that which had not been vainly devised, but well and usefully begun, should

---

according to the testimony of the Sainted King Edgar, became nearly, if not altogether, obsolete, (see *Vit. S. Edgar*, c. 2, § 18; *Act. Sanct.* (Julii), vol. ii. pp. 662, 663, and LINGARD'S *Anglo Saxon Antiquities*, pp. 262, 263), vices throve amongst the laity, and abominations were not even unpractised by the priesthood. For instance, the year 889 is fixed by Alford as the commencement in England of some persons in holy orders living as married men! (*Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. pp. 181, 182, 183, § 5, 13), a gross and lamentable scandal which is traced by Dr. Lingard to the desolation produced by the loss the church sustained in the massacre of its ancient priesthood. (See *Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. pp. 252, 257).

* ASSER, *Vit.*, p. 19.

† See LINGARD'S *Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. pp. 263, 264.

‡ "According to the king's charter, which is in Anglo Saxon, he gave with his daughter Agelive, who was in broken health, a hundred hides with the meat and men belonging to them, and the rights which he had over them. (Cod. Dip. ii. 106)." LINGARD'S *Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 264, note 1. See DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 471, 488.

be still more usefully and advantageously perpetuated. Long previously he had heard that which is written in the Law, that the Lord hath promised to give back again with a tenfold interest whatever is bestowed upon Him; that the tenth to Him shall make the giver ten times richer than before. Instigated by a firm faith in this doctrine, and wishing to surpass all his predecessors, Alfred resolved to devote the half of all his occupations; the half of all his time, of the night, as of the day; the half also of all his worldly wealth, of that income which his just government and his wise management annually brought to him; the half of all these, he devoutly, faithfully, in all sincerity, and from the bottom of his heart, promised to allocate to God's service; and as far as human wisdom, and a mere mortal's discretion could enable him to act up to, and adhere to such a vow, he prudently, clearly, and distinctly fulfilled it.

In carrying out such a resolution, the king conducted himself with his usual caution, for he was warned by the words of Holy Scripture, and hence he came to consider, how he rightly and duly could make that partition of occupation of time, and of wealth, which he had voluntarily devoted to God. And as Solomon sayeth "the heart of the king is in the hands of the Lord," that is, "the wisdom by which his actions are to be directed," so he, counselled by heaven, commanded that his officers and superintendents should make a perfectly equal division of all that which constituted his property and yearly income. Upon that division being made, he allocated one division solely to secular purposes, and these purposes were defined by him to consist of three distinct parts; the first of these consisted in annual largesses bestowed by him upon his

warriors;* and along with these the thanes, who by turns remained in his royal palace, and there discharged certain assigned functions, as his attendants. The service upon him in this respect was so well arranged as to be constantly undergoing a treble rotation; for the royal attendants were wisely divided into three distinct bodies—the first of which, for instance, remained unremittingly in the king's court for the space of one month, and then at the close of the month, upon being succeeded by the second body, its members dispersed, returned to their several homes, and for the space of two months were able to give their attention to their own domestic affairs. Meanwhile, the second body was at the close of the second month relieved from its duties, and like the first returned home, whilst the third performed its assigned offices, and at the close of the third month, was succeeded at court, by the first. It was in this due order, that all the offices and duties attached to the royal person and palace were discharged. Amongst those who filled these offices, the first part of the king's revenues were distributed, but in such a manner that the sovereign's gratuities were bestowed on each, not only with

---

* "Suis bellatoribus." ASSER, p. 19. There appears to us to be a distinction between these persons, and the king's knights "milites." May they not have been employed by king Alfred, in the same manner that the Northern kings employed their "herdmen," or body-guards? See *Konung Halfdan Swartes Saga*, c. iv, and *Konung Harald Harfager's Saga*, c. i, ii. SNORRO, vol. i. pp. 66, 73, 74. LAING'S *Chronicles of the Kings of Narway*, vol. i. pp. 127, 128. An ingenious antiquarian might discover in the peculiar designation of "bellator," applied to the martial retainers of Alfred, the organization of a body of men ready at any moment to undertake the naval defence of the kingdom; because that part of a war-ship in which its soldiers were placed was designated the "bellatorium." See DUCANGE (first edition), vol. i. p. 521.

regard to his rank; but also with due consideration for his particular office. The second part of the king's income (for secular purposes), was assigned to artisans,* a class of persons whom he had collected together, or purchased out of different nations ;† and of whom it might be affirmed

---

* The manner in which these persons were employed is described in another place by Asser,—

"—— De civitatibus et urbibus renovandis, et aliis, ubi nunquam ante fuerant, construendis ædificiis aureis et argenteis incomparabiliter *illo edocente* fabricatis: de aulis et cambris regalibus, lapideis et ligneis *suo jussu* mirabiliter constructis: de villis regalibus lapideis antiqua positione motatis, et in decentioribus locis *regali imperio* decentissime constructis." *Vit. Ælf.*, p. 17.

† "Ex multis gentibus collectos et *comparatos*." ASSER. The artizans so purchased must have been slaves. The value of these slaves may be learned from the ancient law-books. Thus by the *Lex Burgundiorum*, tit. x. § i, the fine for killing a foreign slave used as a domestic servant was 55s., the mulct 12s.; for every other slave, whether a Roman or foreigner, if employed as a ploughman or herdsman, 30s., for a clever goldsmith 150s., a silversmith 100s., a farrier 50s., a carpenter 40s., tit. x. § ii, iii, iv, v, vi. See *Lex Salica* (*ex MS. Guelferbytano*), tit. xxiv, § iv, and the same law, tit. xi, § 6, imposing various penalties according to their respective value, for stealing slaves, or killing them. § vi. is particularly interesting as defining the different occupations of the slaves; for instance the steward "majorem," the butler "infestorem" (παραθέτης), the cup-bearer "scautionem," the groom, "mariscalcum," the stable-boy "scautionem," "stratorem," the blacksmith "fabrum ferrarium," next the "*aurificem* sive *carpentarium*, *vinitorem* vel *porcarium* vel *ministerialem*." In the laws of the Visigoths, whilst a certain money value was attached to the lives of the free, varying from 60s. for the male child one year old to 300s. for the male freeman between twenty and fifty years of age, whilst the half of such sums should be paid for a freedman, accidentally killed, the loss of a slave was to be made good not in money, but by two slaves of the same value. See *Leges Wisigoth*, lib. viii. tit. ii. § xvi. From the same laws we learn that merchants' clerks were sometimes slaves, see lib. xi. tit. iii. § 4, and by the Burgundian law, tit. xxi. § ii, any one hiring out his

he had an almost countless number, but especially of those who were well skilled in the erection of every species of earthly habitation. The third subdivision of his wealth (for secular purposes) was allocated to strangers and foreigners of every nation, whether far or near, who approached him, and upon whom his money was bestowed, whether they asked or did not ask for it. Each according to his station was made to rejoice in the king's liberality; and as the Scripture says "God loveth the cheerful giver," so did he cheerfully bestow upon others the riches which he possessed. The second portion of the entire of the annual income which he possessed—of all his wealth, and of all the tributes payable to him, and which constituted the royal exchequer—he fully and freely devoted to the honour and service of God. This portion, like the first, he commanded his ministers to divide accurately into four parts. The first was, under his direction, sagely and discreetly distributed amongst the poor of all nations, who came to him for relief. In the distribution of these alms he was desirous, as far as human wisdom could enable him to accomplish such an object, to act up to the sentiment of the sainted pope Gregory, in all that pertains to eleemosynary gifts: "Do not give a little to him who wants much, nor much "to him who is in little need, or nothing to him who wants "any thing, nor any thing to him who wants nothing."* The second part of this second portion he bestowed upon the two monasteries he had founded, (of which mention

blacksmith, silversmith, tailor, or shoemaker, slave, was to be responsible for the value of the goods and property entrusted to them. The laws as regarded English slaves we shall have occasion to refer to in another place.

* "Nec parvum cui multum; nec multum cui parvum; nec nihil cui aliquid, nec aliquid cui nihil."

has been already made), and upon the servants of God in these monasteries. The third part was allocated to that school, which he had with such care and diligence instituted for the noble youths of his own nation. The fourth part was distributed amongst the monasteries of the West Saxons and the Mercians, and sometimes, according to the extent of his means, amongst those in Wales, Cornwall, France, Britanny, Northumbria, and occasionally even in Scotland. The churches and the servants of God in all these places were benefitted by his gifts, and life continuing, and the prosperous state of his affairs permitting, he had proposed, that they should feel still more perceptibly the effects of his bounteous disposition.*

---

* ASSER. *Vit.*, pp. 19, 20. We omit here the interesting but somewhat prolix account which Asser gives of king Alfred's contrivance for the proper and accurate distribution of his time. The substance of thirty lines in a large folio volume is given in the few following sentences, by Lappenberg, as "fairly and impartially" as any thing else may be found in the same author:

"With equal exactitude he divided the services of his body and his mind between earth and heaven; and, that he might be the better able to distinguish the hours of the day from those of the night, he devised the following expedient. Of a quantity of wax weighing seventy-two pennies *he caused six candles to be made of equal weight, and each of twelve inches in length.* These, he found, were burnt out in exactly twenty-four hours. To prevent them from being extinguished or influenced by the currents of air from the door, and even crevices in the walls, he caused lanterns of wood and fine horn to be constructed, in which they were sufficiently protected." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 74. Lappenberg, with his Anti-Catholic prejudices quoting from Asser, did not deem it proper to mention that "*the six candles*" were "always lighting before *the relics of many saints*," which Alfred, wherever he went, always carried along with him. "Sex illæ candelæ per 24 horas die nocteque sine defectu coram *sanctis multorum electorum Dei reliquiis* semper eum ubique comitabantur, ardentes lucescebant, (p. 20). The omission is important as shew-

Thus were all things duly ordered and fitly regulated by him; whilst at the same time he devoted the half of all his services to his God—not merely the half, but even more than half, wherever time, place, fitness, his own health, and opportunity permitted him to do so.*

He was careful, scrupulous, and might even be deemed to be tedious, in his examinations as a supreme judge into the truth and accuracy of the sentences delivered, and the judgments given by others; and he was so, because of his extreme regard and anxiety for the poor, whose weal was regarded as one of the most imperative duties imposed upon him in this life.† In the entire of his dominions, it might be said, that with the exception of the king himself the poor had none, or but very few friends and helpers; and this, in sooth, because nearly all the powerful and

---

ing how little reliance can be placed upon the version given by any Anti-Catholic, of the writings of a monkish historian.

As to the lantern of Alfred being made with horn and not with glass, see SPELMAN'S *Life of Alfred*, book iii, § lxxxix, p. 206.

* ASSER. *Vit.*, p. 20. Malmsbury says he divided the day into three parts of eight hours each—"Octo horas in scribendo et legendo et orando, octo in cura corporis, octo in expediendo regni negotia transigeret." *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 123. Both statements may be correct. The service of God does not consist in prayer alone—no more than it does in the reading or even writing of devotional books—it is to be found in the due discharge of one's duties and station in life—in performing the multitudinous acts that attach to those duties and station, and in offering up each and all to the honour and glory of God. The pious Alfred, we may be certain, acted in this spirit, and thus it may be said, "in quantum possibilitas aut suppetentia; immo etiam infirmitas permitteret," he devoted the half, and often more than the half of his time to the service of God.

† "——Et in hoc maxime propter pauperum curam, quibus die noctuque inter cæteros præsentis vitæ debita mirabiliter incumbebat." ASSER, p. 20.

noble men of the kingdom had given up their minds far more to the business of this world, than to thoughts and contemplation on what pertains to the affairs of heaven. Each was more anxious for the advancement of his own private fortune in this life, than disposed to labour for that, which might tend to the general good.

For the sake alike of those of noble as well as of ignoble rank, king Alfred endeavoured by a diligent study to ascertain what were the proper judgements that ought to be delivered in each particular case; because it very frequently happened that in their assemblies, the ealdormen, thanes and reeves obstinately quarrelled with each other, as to the fitting doom that should be pronounced; so much so that scarcely one amongst them could be found to concede as true and proper, that which had been adjudged to be so by the other ealdormen, and thanes and reeves.* Such obstinate, such pertinacious dissensions rendered it necessary that each case should be submitted to the judgement of the king—and such judgement every party was willing to aid to its due fulfilment. The man, however, who had done wrong, who was conscious that there was injustice in his plea, was not willing that it should be submitted to the decision of a judge like Alfred, and was alone by the force and stress of law to be coerced to an appeal to a tribunal, which voluntarily he never would have approached; for he well knew that his iniquity, whatever it might have been, would speedily be laid bare, because there it never could be concealed.† Nor is it to

* Upon the composition of the different courts in ancient times, see ANSTEY'S *Guide to the History of the Laws and Constitutions of England*, pp. 125, 126, 127, 128.

† The following extract will render clear whatever may be considered as obscure in this paragraph :—

be wondered at that such should be case; for in the enforcement of his dooms, as in every thing else that he did, Alfred was a careful enquirer and a diligent watcher.

" 'Let no man suppose it,' concludes Mr. Madox, (Hist. of the Exch., pp. 61, 65), 'to be a novel usage for kings to sit, personally, in judicature. On the contrary it is a very antient one, and conformable to the law and practice of nations.' And that learned author then enumerates many striking passages in sacred and profane history, which illustrate his remarks. I shall not repeat them here; being only too well contented to seize this opportunity of referring you to the admirable and too much neglected book of Mr. Madox. But your own classical studies must have made you familiar with many other instances. One very striking and parallel instance occurs in the early history of ancient Rome. I may say, that it is quite a recent discovery; for although we had some general evidence sufficient to satisfy us that the practice was such in the days of Servius Tullius (Dionysius IV., 25), I do not remember that the principle of the thing is to be found anywhere so well set forth as in the following passage of Cicero, from the Palimpsest of Cardinal Mai. (Cicero de Republica, lib. v. s. ii. f. 247, p. 297).

' " There was nothing so royal as the declaring of equity; wherein consisted the interpretation of right. For private men were wont to seek their right of kings; and, for those causes, there were lands, fields, and woods; and pastures, broad and rich, were set out; which should be to the kings, and which should be tilled without the pains and trouble of the kings, so that no care of private business might withdraw them from the affairs of the peoples. Not every man truely was judge or umpire of the suit, but all things were determined by royal sentences.

" It is an exact counterpart of England, under her Saxon and Norman sovereigns. The king was the great asylum to protect the weaker against the invasions of the more mighty; 'so that,' says Mr. Madox, (Hist. of the Exch. pp. 61, 65), it 'became frequent and usual for men to bring their plaints to the king's court; where they found they could have justice when they could have it no where else: or better justice and relief than they could have elsewhere. And the king's court was open to complainants.' " ANSTEY'S *Guide to the History of the Laws and Constitutions of England*, pp. 188, 189. See PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. pp. 278, 279, 282, 283, 284, 649.

He enquired with equal sagacity and anxiety into all the judgements that were delivered in his absence—he ascertained what they were—made sure whether they were just or unjust; and if he discovered any want of equity in the decrees pronounced, he summoned in a friendly spirit the judges who had delivered them before him, and either by his own personal interrogatories, or through those put by his ministers on whose fidelity he could rely, he penetrated to the cause, or reason, why a wrongful decision had been given—whether it originated in ignorance, or was attributable to malevolence—whether it was traceable to favour for, a fear of, malice against others, or that it had sprung out of a sordid cupidity for money.*

---

* "He was a rigid inquirer into the sentences delivered by his magistrates, and a severe punisher of those who, in that capacity, acted iniquitously." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 123. "In the Mirror of Justice, cap. 2, it is stated that Ælfred, in one year, condemned to be hanged no less than forty-four inferior judges in the hundred, and county courts for false judgements, either in condemning or acquitting men without the verdict of jury." HARDY'S *notes on Wm. of Malmsbury*, vol. i. p. 192, note 3. (E. H. S.) "The Miroir des Justices presents to us many instances of Alfred's punishing judges for misconduct. Andrew Horne, who wrote this work in Norman French in the time of Edward II., has been attacked with great severity by Dr. Hickes, because he makes the *institutions of juries* to be anterior to the conquest. The objections of this respectable critic are, however, weakened by the recollections that Lord Coke and Spelman, before Hickes wrote, and bishop Nicholson since, have maintained, with others, that *the Anglo Saxons had juries*, and we see that Horne professes to have taken his facts from the records of the court." TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 153.

"In its primitive form," observes the most profound and learned of all our legal antiquarians, "*a trial by jury* was only *a trial by witnesses;* and jurymen were distinguished from any other witnesses by the customs, which imposed upon them the obligation of an oath, and regulated their number, and which prescribed their rank, and defined the territorial qualifications, from whence they

If those who were judges admitted that they had given improper decisions, because they were incompetent to know what was right, and what equitable in the plaints that came before them, then he with wisdom, with discretion, and with moderation, rebuked them for their want of sense, or want of knowledge, addressing them in some such words as these:—"I do, in sooth, marvel at "thy presumption, in taking upon thyself an office— "emanating from God, and conferred by me—that office "being one which requires knowledge and wisdom; whilst

---

obtained their degree and influence in society." PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progrëss of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 244. See pp. 250, 253, 254, 255, 267, 268. As to Alfred's punishing unjust judges, see LAPPENBERG, and authorities quoted by him, vol. ii. p. 66, note 2.

In the laws of the Visigoths some stringent regulations will be found with respect to the office of a judge. Little repose was allowed to the judge in the exercise of his functions. "Eidem tamen judici liceat ut in una hebdomada duobus diebus, vel omnibus meridianis horis, si voluerit, absque causarum audientia suæ vacet domui pro quiete. *Reliquo vero tempore*, prolata sibi negotia frequens et absque dilatione qualibet examinet." *Leg. Wisigoth*, lib. ii. tit. i. § 19. By § 20, if a judge decided wrongfully, and had not property sufficient to indemnify the party injured, he was to be publicly flagellated, "4 flagella publice extensus suscipiat." By § 25, the pay of the judge was the same as that of the sheriff (Sayo), viz., 1s. out of every 20s. of the property litigated. For a judge to delay justice was to incur the loss of his office and confiscation of his property, lib. vi. tit. 4, § 4, and by lib. vi. tit. 2, § 5, he was forbidden to consult soothsayers. Perhaps this reference to the laws of the Visigoths may not be considered intrusive, when we can discover amongst them, as in England, a marked distinction between the office and duties of a judge and justice of the peace. By lib. ii. tit. 1, § 16, it is declared that judges are to decide criminal and all other causes; whilst the functions of what we may term "justices of the peace," were thus defined—"*Pacis autem assertores* nisi quas illis regia deputaverit ordinandi potestas. Pacis vero assertores sunt, qui sola faciendæ pacis intentione regali sola destinantur auctoritate." See also § 26.

"at the same time thou hast neglected the study of the "one, and the attainment of the other. I command thee "at once to resign those privileges and territorial posses- "sions, which by reason of that office have been conferred "upon thee, or devote thyself earnestly and diligently to "the acquisition of that wisdom, which must first be "mastered by thyself, before thou are fitted to impart it to "others.*

Such language as this filled with terror those to whom

---

* In this love of justice, in this anxiety to repair wrong, we can discover a similarity between the acts of Alfred, and of Louis le Debonnaire. The Frankish monarch not only corrected the evil deeds of bad judges, but he commissioned special judges—those who might be designated "justices in eyre"—to travel through his dominions, and administer in an impartial spirit the laws; and in so doing, we are assured he restored to freedom many who had been fraudulently reduced to the condition of slaves:—

"Eligit extemplo Missos, quos mittat in orbem
Quorum vita proba sit, generosa fides:
Munera quos nequeant flecti, nec sæva potentum
Blandities, favor, aut ingeniosa lues:
Qui peragrent ceteres Francorum regna perampla,
Justitiam faciant judiciumque simul:
Quos pater, aut patris sub tempore presserat urguens
Servitium, relevent, munere sive dolo.
O quantos qualesque viros, quos aspera jura
Lexque aurata premit, atque potens pretio
Liberat ipse potens, et libertates honorem
Præstat habere sui Cæsar amore patris!
Atque suis manibus præfirmat munere chartas
Degere quis cuncto tempore jure queant
Belliger ipse pater cum regna adquireret armis,
Intentus bellis assiduusque foret,
Tum vitium hoc passim spissis succrevit aristis
Sed tamen adveniens nox, Hludowice, secas."

ERMOLD NIGELL., lib. ii. v. 173, 190. See notes *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, by BOUQUET, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vi, p. 29.

it was addressed—such a rebuke was regarded as a severe punishment, and it acted with all the force of a penalty upon ealdormen, thanes, and reeves, who thenceforth devoted themselves with all the energies of their minds and bodies to the study of all that might aid them in the propounding of equitable decisions. It was wonderful to see men who, though holding the highest offices and rank, had been illiterate from their childhood, now commencing, in the maturity of their years, literary studies. The reason for their doing so was this, that they preferred, whatever was the cost, the toil, and the trouble, to submit to a course of discipline, which however personally disagreeable, or difficult to attain, was still less grating to their feelings than the abandonment of power they had hitherto exercised, or the resignation of offices which they had previously possessed. And if there were amongst these great men, one who either from his advanced years, or from the total disuse of his faculties in the acquirement of knowledge, felt himself to be utterly incapable of undergoing the toil of study, then he employed his own son, or if not his son, a relation, or if not a relation, a man of his own, a free man, or else *one of his slaves, whom he had because of his literary capacity previously promoted to the rank of a free man,** in order that such person, whenever he had any spare time, might read aloud books for him in the Anglo Saxon language. Often and often was such a great man heard to sigh, and express aloud his deep and heartfelt grief, that he had not in his youth devoted himself to

* "Vel etiam si aliter non habeat, suum proprium hominem liberum vel servum quem ad lectionem longe ante promoverat." Asser, p. 21.

literary studies—declaring that the young men in Alfred's reign were to be regarded as truly fortunate, because they had the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of every liberal science; whilst on the contrary, those like himself were to be looked upon as truly unhappy, because in their youth they had not been taught, and because in their old age, however vehement was their desire, they were incapable of learning.*

In the course of this year, (888), the sister of king Alfred died as she was proceeding on her way to Rome.† This was Ethelswitha the wife of Burhred, and formerly queen of the Mercians. She died, clothed as a nun,‡ in Pavia, and was there interred with all the honors due to her high rank.§

The abbot Bernhelm in the year 890 brought the alms of the West Saxons and of their king Alfred to Rome.‖

* ASSER, *Vit. Ælf.*, pp. 20, 21. May it not have been on account of this inaptitude on the part of his ealdormen to acquire any species of book-learning, that Alfred deprived them of a portion of their judicial functions and conferred it on justiciaries, as stated by Ingulphus? "Præfectos vero provinciarum (qui antea vicedomini vocabantur,) in duo officia divisit, id est, in judices, quos nunc Justitiarios vocamus, et in vicecomites qui adhuc idem nomen retinent." *Histor.* p. 28. See LAPPENBERG's *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 67.

† *Sax. Chronicle.*

‡ "In habitu religionis defuncta est."—ROG. DE WEND.

§ ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. pp. 354, 355. See W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 96, p. 133. F. WIGORN, ad an. 889, p. 595. ETHELWERD, lib. iv. p. 846.

‖ *Saxon Chronicle.* See ETHELWERD, ad an. 888, 889, p. 846. We purposely insert these frequent notices of embassies to Rome

Guthrum, the king of the Northmen, and who when baptised as a Christian, received the name of Athelstan, died this year.* He died king of the East Angles, having received it, as the gift of king Alfred, upon conforming to the Christian religion.†

This year was Plegmund chosen by God and all his saints to be the archbishop of Canterbury.‡

---

in the life of Alfred, because a comparatively modern author positively affirms that this great Catholic sovereign was not in "all things conformable to the see of Rome." See SPELMAN'S *Life of Alfred*, book iii. § cix, cxv., pp. 219, 220, 221. Another Anti-Catholic author, with a greater respect for truth, says: "Ælfred appears to have entertained a more regular intercourse with Rome than any of his predecessors."—LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo-Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 72.

* *Sax. Chron.* "Electus mox Romam iter suscepit ubi *a Formoso Papa consecratus* est et pallium accepit."—*Anglia Sacra*, vol. i. p. 99. With respect to the exertions of this pious archbishop and of the pope Formosus, to check impure heretical practises amongst clergymen, see BARONIUS, ad an. 894, § x, xi, xii, xiii. PAGI, § vi, xvi., vol. xv. pp. 469, 474.

† ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 354. The manner in which Guthrum is referred to by Ethelwerd, tends to shew that he disgraced the name of a Christian by the morals and manners of an infidel. "Tum et orco tradit spiramen Guthrum," p. 846. See W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 122. As to the place in which Guthrum was interred, see ASSER, *Annal.*, p. 171.

‡ *Saxon Chronicle.* It was in the course of this year, 890, according to Alford, vol. iii. p. 187, § 11, that King Alfred sent a copy of his translation of the pastoral of St. Gregory to all the cathedrals in his kingdom. "The subjects" of this pastoral are truly described by Mr. Turner, when he says that they "are chiefly *the miracles stated to be performed in Italy by religious men*," (*History of Anglo Saxons*, book v. c. 3. vol. ii. p. 91). Three copies of this pastoral are still in existence. Each was accompanied by an æstel of the value of fifty mancusses—"superque singulos libros *stilum*, qui est quinquaginta mancussæ." The king "in the name of God" commanded that "the æstel should never be removed from the book, nor the book from the church, unless

In the year 891,* three Irishmen, Dusblan, Mahbeth, and Mulmunin, desirous to devote their lives to God as pilgrims, determined to abandon their native land. This project was secretly carried into execution by them, and in this manner. They supplied themselves with provisions for a week, and then having constructed for themselves a leathern boat (a corricle) which was made of two hides and a half. In this they, without oars or a sail, committed themselves to the sea, where they were tossed about for seven days, and finally were drifted upon the coast of Cornwall. From thence they proceeded to the king Alfred.† By this sovereign they were graciously received, and from his court, they travelled to Rome—thus imitating the example of so many other pious persons. From Rome,

---

the bishop should wish to read it himself, or to lend it to others for the purpose of being transcribed." All the books but three have disappeared, and the valuable æstels were, in the times of the religious reformation, "purloined," and so completely made away with, that a learned antiquarian like the Rev. Dr. Lingard is obliged to ask—"what was the æstel of fifty mancusses which accompanied each copy?" a question which we believe no man can answer—not even those who approve of that change in religion, which was effected amid the spoliation and desecration of churches —and that was marked by such a want of patriotism that it did not spare even the ashes of the great king Alfred. See SPELMAN'S *Life of King Alfred*, book iii. § 107, p. 217, note 2. LINGARD'S *History and Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. pp. 248, 249, 250, 251. ALFORD, *Annal. Eccl. Anglic.*, vol. iii. p. 187, § xi, xii, xiii. For an analysis of the writings of Alfred, see TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol ii. pp. 16—120; and SPELMAN'S *Life of Alfred*, book iii. § xcix, cii. pp. 210, 214. LELAND *Scriptor. Britan.*, pp. 144, 153. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 70, 71. PITSEUS, *Illust. Ang. Script.*, pp. 169, 170, 171.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. WIGORN, ad an. 891, p. 595.

it was their determination to proceed on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.*

---

* ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. iii. p. 846. *The Saxon Chronicle* designates these three Irish pilgrims as Dubslane, Macbeth, and Maclinmun. Ethelwerd calls them Dufflan, Macheathath, and Magilmum. The last he says was a distinguished scholar "artibus frondens littera doctus, magister insignis Scottorum." See ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 355.

These Irishmen were voluntary pilgrims, moved alone by piety to reduce themselves to that condition; but there were others, and men too of royal rank, like St. Mengold, a relative of the king of Northumberland, who in the year 892, became pilgrims, in obedience to the canonical penance imposed upon them. St. Mengold had stained his hand with blood, and it is thus, that he and his wife the princess Geyla testified before God and man, their sorrow for their past sins:—

"—— In sacris locis invicem incipiunt tractare, et virorum Dei consilia secreto inde capientes, de contemptu mundi, de modis pœnitentiæ, de criminalium satisfactione, Scripturas sibi exponi faciunt; esurientibus, sitientibus, nudis, infirmis, in carceribus positis, solerti assiduitate subveniunt, eo quod didicerant, quod ex iis quinque operibus misericordiæ, ibunt ex ore Filii hominis fideles in vitam æternam. Tandem proximioribus relinquentes fundos et sæcullaria, uno assensu Geyla velum sacrum sibi imponit, et Meyngoldus militiæ abrenuntians arma deponit: et de criminalibus ac homicidiis, quibus obnoxius fuit, suscipiens a sacerdote quod lex habebat canonica, *cinere aspersus, cilicio indutus, nudis pedibus,* in regiones longinquas abscedit. *Septem igitur annos* ab ingressu ecclesiarium se abstinens, sine querula, *sine omni nota,* sacra circuiens loca, sibi in salutem, *aliis peccatoribus ad exemplum fuit,* et corde contrito ac spiritu contribulato sacrificium Deo acceptabile de suis visceribus obtulit." *Act. Sanct.*, (Feb.,) vol. ii., *Vit.* S. MENGOLD. c. iv, § xix. p. 195.

It frequently happened that persons going on pilgrimage carried with them passports to insure their personal safety, and hospitable treatment. We annex two of the forms of such passports, hoping they may interest the reader, as much as they did the translator:—

Form No. I. "To bishops, abbots, abbesses, and to all holy fathers, holding apostolic place and jurisdiction, and to all dukes,

King Alfred was (in the year 892) threatened with in-

---

earls, vicars, minor judges, lay as well as secular (Centenariis et Decanis), or, to all believing in Christ, and fearing God, I, in the name of God, although an unworthy sinner, and the very meanest servant of the servants of God, bishop (so and so), or abbot (of a certain town, city, or monastery), where the remains of the illustrious martyr or confessor, lie bodily interred, pray for your eternal salvation in the Lord. Be it then known to you, my lords and holy fathers, or my sisters in Christ, that we desire to have it notified to you, that this stranger, of such a name, and such family, came to us, and disclosed to us the fact, and therefore sought for our counsel, viz., that he, instigated by the enemy (of mankind), and by reason of his own sins, slew his own son or nephew of such a name; and for this, we, according to canonical practice, and institutions, have adjudged such person for so many years to be bound according to the law affecting pilgrims, to travel about as a pilgrim. Therefore know, most holy fathers, these facts by the present letters, so that when they reach you, you may be the more readily disposed to credit his statement, and that you may the more certainly be assured, that he is going about for no other cause, than that which we have already stated; that is for the redemption of his sins; and that you may not detain him, but that when he comes to you, you may be pleased to bestow upon him shelter, and fire, with bread and water; and then that it may be permitted to him without impediment to speed on his way to visit holy places (loca sanctorum). Thus do, oh! most holy fathers, for the love of God, and in honour of St. Peter, so that the blessed Lord may worthily reward you with a blissful and everlasting life, because in the pilgrim you have honoured and received Christ, bearing in mind, what our Lord himself has said, "*I was a stranger and you took me in,*" and "*as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.*" We add no other words to *these*. To the wise it is sufficient to speak but once. We earnestly commend ourselves to your pious prayers; and beg, that in them, you will remember us. We bid you heartily farewell in Christ, and pray that you, most holy fathers, may be deemed worthy of being received in the everlasting abode of the angels. Dated this day."

Formularium, appendix, § 10. MARCULFUS. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. p. 509.

Form, No. II. "To holy and apostolic lords, and venerable fathers in Christ, and to kings, counts, bishops, abbots, priests,

cursions from the Northmen in all parts of his kingdom,*

and clerks, or to all the christian people, who serve God in the province of the Romans, or Longobards, as with those who are in monasteries, as in towns, and whether they dwell in hamlets or villages, I, in the name of God, supreme magistrate, (Major Domus, see *Lex Ripuariorum*, tit. lxxxviii). Be it known to your mightiness, or your reverence (magnitudo, seu et sanctitas vestra) that this person our brother, of such a name, and your servant, has sought from us, that he may either for his own sins, or for our salvation be allowed to travel, for the purpose of praying in the church of St. Peter your father, (S. Petri patris vestri). Therefore do we, with greeting, address these letters to you by him, that you may for the love of God, and St. Peter, receive him hospitably, and kindly; or, for his consolation, that you may, both in travelling through as in entering upon your district, so provide, that he may safely go to, and safely depart from you; and in the intermediate period, that you may, according to your good custom for his solace, or assistance, order and direct, that he may be so treated as that his days may pass in peace and happiness. May Him whose power is eternal, for ever guard you in his everlasting kingdom. We salute you all with a most ample greeting."

Formulæ Bignonianæ, § xv. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. pp. 542, 543. Instances of the dangers to which pilgrims were exposed will be found in vol. viii. pp. 177, 180, 194.

An ancient and high English authority thus alludes to the sufferings and merits of pilgrims:—"It is a deep penitence, that a layman lay aside his weapons and travel far barefoot, and nowhere pass a second night, and fast, and watch much, and pray fervently, by day and by night, and voluntarily suffer fatigue, and be so squalid that iron come not on hair, or on nail.

"Nor that he come into a warm bath, nor into a soft bed, nor taste flesh, nor any thing from which drunkenness may come, nor that he come within a church; but yet diligently seek holy places, and declare his sins, and implore intercession, and kiss no one, but be ever fervently repenting his sins.

"Roughly he fares who thus constantly criminates himself; and yet is he happy, if he never relax, till he make full 'bōt,' because no man in the world is so very criminal, that he may not make atonement to God, let him undertake it fervently."

Canons enacted under King Edgar. Penitent, § x, xi, xii. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, pp. 411, 412.

* "Sed cum undique regi Alfredo hostium incursiones imminerent." ROG. DE WEND., ad an. 892, vol. i. p. 356.

and although it has been affirmed that "the laws are silent when the clash of arms is heard;"* yet was he, even amid the clattering of warlike weapons, and the braying clamour of trumpets, to be found enacting and enforcing laws, which might accustom his people to pay a due attention both to the practices of religion, and a rigid observance of military discipline.† The example of the barbarous Northmen had so demoralised the native English, that they wished to profit by plunder; and did in fact, practise it to such an extent, that there was no travelling through the country, without a guard of armed men. It was on this account that Alfred instituted centuries, that is "hundreds" and tenths, viz., "tythings;" so that every Englishman, living in accordance with the law, should have and be able to state, what was his "hundred," and what his "tything."‡ By this means, if any person were charged with the perpetration of any crime, he could on the instant bring forward from his hundred and tything security; whilst he who could find no such sureties had every reason to fear the full severity of the law. He also provided, that if the person accused should fly justice, either before or after sureties had been given, then that all the persons both of the hundred and the tything should incur the pay-

---

* "Leges inter arma sileant." Cicero pro Milone, iv.

† W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § 122.

‡ "Eliguntur in iisdem conciliis et principes, qui jura per *pagos vicosque* reddunt. *Centeni* singulis ex plebe comites, consilium et auctoritas, adsunt." TACITUS *German.*, § 12. See PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. pp. 64, 65, 96, 97, 195. DUCANGE in verb. "Centenarius."

ment of a certain mulct to the king.* By such means as these he diffused such a perfect state of peace throughout his kingdom, that he ordered in the highways, and even upon the very cross-roads, bracelets of gold† to be suspended, the richness of which should dazzle and deride the covetousness of travellers, because whilst all were free to look upon and wish for them, none might dare to touch, nor to take them away.‡

---

* As to the law of Frankpledge, see ANSTRY's *Guide to the History of the Laws and Constitutions of England*, pp. 120, 121, 122.

† "Armillas aureas juberet suspendi." W. MALMSB. The armilla constituted a very important ornament amongst the ancient Northern nations. The following is the description given of an heroic Northman:—

"Pallio itaque exutus apparuit veste cærulea amictus, *armillam illam* pretiosam *brachio* gestans, cinctus baltheo argenteo admodum crasso, a quo marsupium pendebat, a latere vero gladius; pileum pellibus subductum gerebat; facies erat villosa, parumque lippiebat." TORFÆUS. *Hist. Norveg.*, lib. v. c. xxix, vol. i. p. 232. See also pp. 197, 203. 228, 403. The weight and value of the armilla may be surmised from the fact, that in one instance a golden chalice for the altar was formed out of one of them. "Apparet hinc," says the Antiquarian Torfæus, "vocem *hringr* non *annulum* sed *armillam* denotare, hautque exiquum fuisse, cum ex hac una calix conflari possit." *Hist. Norveg.*, lib. x. c. 2, vol. ii. p. 403. See as to the "armilla," as constituting a portion of a lady's dress, ERMOLD. NIGELL, lib. iv. v., pp. 387, 394. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vi. p. 58. The exposure with impunity of these tempting ornaments, proves how completely Alfred must have instilled a due fear of any violation of the law, not only into the minds of his English, but also of his Danish subjects. Further information respecting this ancient ornament will be found in DUCANGE in verb. "armillum," and in DONNEGAN's *Greek and English Lexicon*, in verb. ψελλιοποιος, ψελλιον, ψελλιοφορος, p. 1724.

‡ W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § cxxii. See INGULPHUS, *Hist.*, p. 28. BROMTON. *Chron.*, p. 818. Upon the changes in the administration, and enforcement of the law ascribed to Alfred, the reader may consult, with advantage, LAPPENBERG's *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 66, 67, 68. TURNER's *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 149, 152.

In the year 893 died Cuthred king of the Northumbrians; and the Pagans in Northumbria made the same year peace with king Alfred, to which they bound themselves by the most solemn oaths.*

It was in this year (893) that an immense army of the Pagan Northmen congregated together at Boulonge.† From thence they sailed in a fleet consisting of two hundred and fifty ships, in which were embarked not merely men, but horses; and with that force they sailed into the mouth of the Rother (Limne),‡ a river in East Kent, which approaches close to one end of that vast forest, which is from east to west one hundred and twenty miles in length, thirty miles in breadth, and is called "Andredswald." The Northmen towed their ships four miles up the river, until they reached a fort, which had been hastily erected on a fenny piece of ground by a few churls. This was speedily destroyed by them;§ and they then built for themselves on firmer ground, and a better selected position, another fortress—at a place called Appledore.‖

---

* Rog. de Hoveden, *Annal.* p. 420. See S. Dunelm. *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 13, pp. 21, 22, and the vision of St. Cuthbert to the successor of Cuthred, King Elfred, c. 14, pp. 22, 23.

† *Sax. Chron.* See H. Hunt., lib. v. p. 351.

‡ "One of the Danish ships here mentioned has been recently discovered in the channel of the river Rother, formerly called Limene or Limne, in a perfectly sound and entire state, after a lapse of 929 years. It was found buried ten feet deep in the sand. This undoubted relic of antiquity affords a singular confirmation of the accuracy of King Alfred's account of the Danish invasions, contained in the Saxon Chronicle." Ingram's *Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, appendix, p. 379. See Spelman's *Life of Alfred*, book 1, § 101, p. 78, note 1.

§ *Sax. Chron.*

‖ F. Wigorn, p. 595.

Soon after the arrival of this first detachment of the Northmen, the Pagan king Hasting* sailed into the Thames with eighty war-frïgates,† and the moment he landed, erected a fortress in the royal vill at Middleton.‡ Both armies established their winter quarters for this year in England.§

In the year 894‖ the Pagans, who inhabited Northumbria and East Anglia, and who had bound themselves by oaths, and had given hostages that they would be ever peaceable and loyal to king Alfred, violated their engagements as soon as they heard that an army of the Northmen was established in Kent and engaged in plundering the people.¶ They instantly commenced the spoliation of the English, and thus co-operated with their own countrymen in the work of destruction. Alfred, upon hearing of these calamities, immediately marched an army into Kent, established a fortified encampment between the two divisions of his foes, so that he could at once come to an encounter with either, the moment it moved for the purposes of plunder or

---

* See SPELMAN'S *Life of Alfred*, book 1, § 93, p. 71; LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 55. 56.

† See DUNCANGE, in verb. "*paro*." ABBO., *Bell. Paris. Urb.* lib. i. v. 250.

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 595.

§ ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 3, p. 847. See *Chron. Petriburg.*, p. 26. H. HUNT., p. 351. ROG. DE HOVEDEN, p. 420. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. pp. 355, 356.

‖ *Sax. Chron.*

¶ ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 357. In the annals of Asser, it is stated that the city of York was taken by the Northmen, but that Bishop Sebar happily escaped their hands. See ad an. 893, p. 172.

of war.* The Northmen meanwhile, whether on horseback or on foot, whenever they believed, or had ascertained, the soldiers of the king were not to be found, devoted themselves to the robbery of the several places in their neighbourhood; but in doing were made to feel, in the frequent losses inflicted upon them, both the vigilance and vengeance of the king.

At last they were so harassed by the attacks of the king, that they abandoned Kent, and made a rapid retreat to Middleton, where the cruel Danish king Hasting had established his winter encampment. They were hotly pursued by Alfred, who upon arriving in front of the fortress recently erected by the Northmen, at once invested it with the full determination of forcing his foes to a complete submission.

Hasting, perceiving that he had no hope of offering an effectual resistance to the king, immediately employed his mind in devising a scheme by which he might hope to deceive and elude the grasp of Alfred. In accordance with this plan he sent messengers to the English sovereign, declaring that if he were allowed to retire unmolested, he would never again disturb the kingdom, and that he was willing to bind himself to do this both by oath and hostages; and then for the purpose of inducing Alfred to place the greater confidence in his promises, he sent to him his two sons, both young boys, declaring that if the king, so pleased he might have them baptised as members of the Christian community.

* The position of Alfred's encampment is thus minutely and graphically described by Florence of Worcester :—"Loco quidem, situ naturali munito, utpote aquis plene circumfluentibus, undis admodum crispantibus, scopulis altis, sylvis undique protelantibus," p. 595.

These requests were complied with by Alfred—the truly virtuous king, who ever preferred to save the souls of his barbarous foes from perdition, than to give their bodies to destruction.* Many hostages were received, and the regenerating waters of baptism were poured upon the two young sons of Hasting: the king Alfred acting as the God-father of the one, and the illustrious ealdorman Ethered performing the same pious office for the other.†

In the course of the year, Alfred fought against the Northmen at a place called Farnham, where their king was wounded and put to flight, many of them slain, the remainder forced to abandon their spoil, and as they had to cross the Thames to make good their retreat into Essex, numbers of them perished in the river.‡

The king soon after this heard that a great part of the Pagan army, upon whom he had inflicted this signal defeat, had proceeded by sea to Exeter. He instantly followed them with an army composed both of horsemen and infantry, fought bravely against them, overcame and completely dispersed them.

Meanwhile, in obedience to the directions of Alfred,

---

* Roc. de Wendov., vol. i. pp. 357, 358.

† F. Wigorn, p. 596. We believe a species of Pagan baptism prevailed amongst the Northmen before Christianity was heard of by them.

"———— puerum in itinere Thora peperit, quam Sigurdus comes aqua aspersit, aleque nomine patris sui Haconis Haconem nominavit. Namque ad illud aspergendi, nominaque recens natis indendi, ministerium præcipui viri, pro cujusque sorte et conditione, delecti sunt." Torfæus, *Hist. Norveg.*, lib. i. c. 36, vol. ii. p. 63. See for the opinions of Mr. Laing on this point, *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. pp. 81, 82. Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, pp. 206, 313, 320, 366, 372. Edited by J. A. Blackwell.

‡ Asser. *Annal.*, p. 172.

Ethered, the ealdorman of the Mercians, at the head of an immense body of the citizens of London, and an almost innumerable phalanx of experienced and accomplished warriors, marched upon Benfleet where the Pagans had established a fortification. This was taken by storm, and its captors discovered in it an enormous amount of Danish spoliations, consisting of gold, of silver, of fine horses, and of costly garments. With these spoils they possessed themselves also of the wife and two young sons of Hasting, who were brought back by them to London.* These were presented to Alfred by the ealdorman Ethered, who at the same time demanded to know "what ought to be done with the wife and children of him, who had perfidiously violated the solemn compact he had entered into with a sovereign?" All unanimously declared that an ignominious death should be inflicted upon them. The king opposed himself to such a decision. He would not allow ought of evil to befall these two boys, for both of whom, himself and Ethered, had been sponsors in baptism; and hence he ordered that they, as well as their mother, should be restored to their freedom.† He not only sent them all back to Hasting, but bestowed upon them in going an abundant store of wealth.‡

---

* Asser, *Annal.*, p. 172.

† Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 360.

‡ "Non solum uxorem et filios verum etiam non modicum pecuniæ reddidit." F. Wigorn, p. 596. See *Sax. Chron.* ad an. 894. This generosity on the part of Alfred will be found deserving of the greater admiration, if we bear in mind that the fortress at Benfleet was erected in direct violation of the compact proposed by Hasting, and that it had been used for the very worst purposes:—"—— a quo etiam assiduas agens irruptiones, omnem patriam devastavit." R. Wend., vol. i. p. 359.

The Pagans who had fled in great terror to their ships, from Exeter, upon the advance of Alfred against them, reappeared in the neighbourhood of Chichester, where they commenced their accustomed spoliations.* They were however not only repulsed by the inhabitants of Chiches-

---

It is the fashion for modern "philosophic historians," parodying Gibbon and imitating Voltaire, to describe infidels as acting generously; and then these same writers, by falsifying or concealing facts, endeavouring to disparage the conduct of Catholics. The best mode of refuting such writers is by appealing to past events; and none are so abundant with proofs of perfidy and cruelty on the part of unbelievers, as those which are connected with the history of Anti-Christian pirates in the different parts of Europe which they invaded. Let us, for an instant, contrast this conduct of Alfred towards the wife and children of Hasting, with that pursued by infidels in 869, when they captured the Archbishop of Arles—killed him by their cruelty on board their warships, and then pretending to restore him to his people for an immense ransom, carried the dead body dressed in pontifical robes on shore—pretending to honour him by thus bearing him—and then having received the ransom, leaving it to the Christians when they approached the prelate to discover to their horror that they were addressing a lifeless corpse! We give this anecdote in the words of the ancient annalist Hincmar:—

"Unde CL. libris argenti, et CL. mantellis, et CL. spatis, et CL. mancipiis, præter illa quæ in placito data sunt, ad redemptionem ejus concessa sunt. Interea idem Episcopus in navibus moritur xiii. Kalend. Octobris. Sarraceni autem ingeniose accelerantes de redemptione illius, quasi non possent ibi amplius immorari, si illum vellent recipere, redemptores illius redemptionem pro eo dare accelerarent edicunt. Quod et factum est. Et Sarraceni suscepta omni redemptione, miserunt eundem Episcopum sedere in cathedra indutum vestimentis sacerdotalibus, cum quibus captus fuerat: et velut pro honore deportaverunt eum in terra a navibus. Redemptores autem illius volentes cum eo colloqui, et congratulari ei, invenerunt eum mortuum. Quem cum maximo luctu exportantes sepelierunt eum x Kalendas Octobris in sepulchro, quod sibi ipse paraverat.

Annal. Bertin., 869. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 102. PERTZ *Mons. Ger. Hist.* vol. i. pp. 485, 486.

* F. WIGORN, p. 596.

ter, but numbers of them were slain, and many of their ships captured. Meanwhile the army which had been defeated at Benfleet, (as we have already stated), retreated to Shobury (Sceobyrig) in Essex, and there erected a very strong fortification. This body of men was soon strengthened by considerable reinforcements of East Anglian and Northumbrian Pagans, and immediately afterwards its detachments of plunderers were to be found first on the banks of the Thames, and subsequently wasting the land on the borders of the Severn.

This spoliating system of warfare was regarded as intolerable by the truly illustrious generals, Ethered, Ethelm, Ethelnoth, and the other king's thanes, to whom had been confided the care and command of the fortresses, towns and cities in every district east of Pedridon, and west of Selwood, upon the eastern as well as the northern bank of the Thames. These generals congregated from the districts, we have specified, no mean force, to which were soon united, as allies, Welshmen who dwelt on the western shores of the Severn. All these marched as a compact body in pursuit of the Northmen, who were overtaken by them at Buttington on the banks of the Severn. The entrenchments to which the Pagans had fled, were immediately blockaded by the pursuers both by land and water.

Many weeks passed away in this double blockade of the Pagans, in the course of which some of them perished of hunger, and others, having eaten all their horses, broke suddenly from their entrenchments, and attacked the Christian army on the eastern bank of the river. In this encounter many thousands of the Pagans perished—the remainder fled, and a doleful dear-bought victory was con-

ceded to the Christians. In this battle fell the most noble Ordeah, and many of the king's thanes were slain.*

The Pagans who made their escape from Buttington retreated to Essex, where they had both ships and fortresses; and upon the approach of winter were able to muster together a large army, which was principally composed of reinforcements from Northumbria and East Anglia. Their wives, their wealth and their ships were left by them in East Anglia, and then abandoning all their entrenchments they made a forced march upon the unprotected city of Chester,† and were able to effect an entrance into it before they could be overtaken by Alfred, or the princely Ethered, who followed them in all haste with their army. So quickly however did the royal army pursue the Pagans that it was able to take a few prisoners, to kill some of the soldiers, and to deprive them of the flocks and herds they had captured. The king's soldiers beleaguered the city for two days, whilst a portion was employed in wasting the country round it, and such parts of the standing crops, which they did not reserve for their own horses they destroyed by fire.‡

In the year 895,§ the Danes, who had entrenched themselves in Chester, having been deprived by the king's

---

* See as to the battle of Buttington, ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. iii, p. 847.

† See TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 597, note 51 on the word "*Legeceastre.*" Mr. Turner's interpretation will be found confirmed by the *Saxon Chronicle*, A.D. 895.

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 596. Alford fixes the date of the death of Alfred's daughter, the abbess Æthelgeou, in the year 895. See vol. iii. p. 197, § 3.

§ *Sax. Chron.*

soldiers both of the corn and cattle, which they had acquired by plunder, found it was impossible to remain in the position they had selected, and therefore marched into North Wales, where they soon secured an immense booty.* In their next expeditions to Northumbria and East Anglia, they were enabled to elude the forces of the king, and at length they reached the island of Mersey on the sea-coast of Essex. In the course of the same year they towed their ships into the Thames, and thence up the Lea.† They there established a fortification at a place distant about twenty miles from London.‡

In the summer season of the year 896, a great body of the London citizens, aided by the inhabitants of several surrounding districts, made an attack, with the intention of destroying the fortification, which the Northmen had built. In this attack they were repulsed. The Northmen vigorously defended their entrenchments; the Christians were compelled to retreat, and four of the king's thanes were killed.§

In the autumn of this year, the king formed an entrenched camp in the neighbourhood of London, for the purpose of protecting those who were engaged in harvest work from being subjected to an attack on them, by the

---

* "Terram Septentrionalium Britonum petunt, quam longe, lateque devastantes, prædam quam maximam secum educunt." F. WIGORN, p. 596.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 597. A difference of opinion exists as to the place where this Danish fortification was erected, "Camden mentions Wane; Spelman, Hertford." TURNER'S *Anglo Saxon History*, vol. i. p. 598, note 54.

§ F. WIGORN, p. 597. See *Sax. Chron.*

Danes, and it so happened, that as he was one day riding along the banks of the river, he began to consider how he could so bar up the passage as to render it impossible for the Northmen to bring their ships in safely out of the position in which they had placed them. The project which he thus conceived was instantly carried into execution. Both sides of the river were invested with effectual barriers.* Works were thrown up and completed before the Northmen could extricate their ships.† As soon as the Pagans perceived they had been thus intercepted, they sent their wives to East Anglia, abandoned their ships and fled with all speed to Quatbridge,‡ where they raised a fortification, and established their winter quarters.§

Whilst the army of king Alfred rode to the west in pursuit of the enemy, the men of London took possession of the ships of the Danes. They broke up all the vessels that were not worthy of being removed; but such as were esteemed deserving of being considered as prizes, they brought back with them, and placed in the port of London.‖

---

* F. Wigorn, p. 597.

† *Sax. Chron.* The manner in which Alfred rendered it impossible for the Danes to withdraw their ships is told differently by Henry of Huntingdon:—"fecit rex aquam *Luye* findi in tria brachia, ne puppes suas per eam reducere possent." *Hist.*, lib. v. p. 351.

‡ "Quatbrig." F. Wigorn, p. 597. "Quatbridge by Severn." *Sax. Chron.*, Mr. Turner suggests that it must have been "Bridgnorth." See *History of Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. p. 599, note 57.

§ F. Wigorn, p. 597.

‖ *Sax. Chron.* Some of the monkish historians place under the date of this year, 896, and erroneously, an account of the Council of Tribur. In it were passed decrees against "pleros sæculares, qui

In the summer of the year 897, the army of the Danes, which had entrenched itself at Quatbridge was broken up.* The men dispersed—some into East Anglia, others into Northumbria, and others who were reduced to absolute poverty contrived to obtain ships, and sailing away to the south, at length reached the Seine.†

The enemy had not, thank God! entirely destroyed the English nation. Worse than the effects of war, were the ravages of a pestilence which prevailed for three years, and tended still more than the attacks of the Northmen to weaken the strength of the kingdom. There was a disease of cattle, and a mortal sickness amongst men; "so that many of the "mightiest of the king's thanes that were in the land died

---

Episcopalem auctoritatem minuere tentaverunt." (F. WIGORN, p. 597). As to the burial of the dead one of the regulations is interesting, for it declares that in case of necessity this permission be given: —"Ubi decimam persolvebat vivus, sepeliatur mortuus." BARONIUS, ad an. 895, vol. xv, p. 475. *Critic Pagi*, § i. See also LABBÆUS *Concilia*, vol. ix. p. 449, § xv, where the advantage to be derived by the dead from the prayers of the living, is distinctly declared. § xviii, pp. 450, 451, is interesting as referring to the vessels used in the sacrifice of the mass, and § xix, p. 451, as to the due commixture of wine and water.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† The proceedings of Hasting in France, the leader of the Northmen in this unsuccessful invasion of England, will be found referred to in *Alberic. Chron.*, A.D. 904. *Hist. Reg. Franc.*, 921. *Orderic. Vital*, lib. iv, 940. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix, pp. 12, 43, 63, 71. We think it is not improbable that the same person is also alluded to in the following extract. "Tunc Carolus ex Normannis quendam Regem, *Hunedeum* nomine, sibi amicum statuens, eum baptizari faciens, de sacro fonte levavit." *Chron. Sithiens*, ad an. 897. See DEPPING, *Expeditions Maritimes des Normands*, vol. ii. pp. 75, 79, 80. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 79.

"within the three years.* Amongst these were Swithulf, "bishop of Rochester; Ceolmund, ealdorman in Kent; Ber- "tulf, ealdorman in Essex; Wulfred, ealdorman in Hamp- "shire; Elhard, bishop of Dorchester; Eadulf, a king's thane "in Sussex; Bernulf, governor of Winchester, and Egulf the "king's horse thane.† Such were the men of the highest rank, but many more died about the same period of time.

"The same year the plunderers in East Anglia and "Northumbria, greatly harassed the land of the West "Saxons, by piracies on the southern coast; but most of "all by the esks,‡ which they had built many years be- "fore.

"Then did king Alfred give orders for building ships "against the esks which were full nigh twice as long as "the others. Some of these English ships had sixty oars,§

---

* The passages marked with inverted commas in this, and the succeeding paragraphs, are adopted, with very slight variations, from "Ingram's Translation of the Saxon Chronicle"—a work which adheres with great fidelity to the simplicity of the original.

† "Strator regius." F. WIGORN, p. 597. "A very important charge. The *Stallere* held the highest station in the Witenagemot, and was the first man in the kingdom below the king." PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. ii. p. cccxlvi. See DUCANGE, in verb. *strator*.

‡ "Eodem anno exercitus Paganorem in Estanglia et Northim- bria residentium, furtivam prædam circa ripas maris agentes, terram, Occidentalium Saxonum graviter vexabant, maxime *longis celeri- busque navibus*, quas ipsi ante plures annos fabricaverant." F. WIGORN, p. 597.

§ "Alfredus naves longas scilicit 40 remorum vel plurium fecit parari contra Dacos." H. HUNT., p. 351. See BROMTON *Chron.*, p. 813. "Adversum quos bis longiores, altiores, celeriores mi- nusque nutantes, ex præcepto regis Alfredi fabricantur naves." F. WIGORN, p. 597. In this description of the English ships, Rog. de Hoveden changes the word "altiores," into "arctiores," p. 420.

"some had more; and they were both swifter and steadier, "and also higher than those to which they were to be op- "posed. They were not shaped after the Fresian or the "Danish model; but so as he himself thought that they "might be the most serviceable.*

"At a certain period in this year, there came six of the "Northmen's ships to the Isle of Wight, and their crews "did much mischief, there, as they had done in Devon- "shire, and in every place, at which they touched along the "coast. The king then commanded his men to go out "against the pirates in nine of his new ships, so as to pre- "vent the escape of the Northmen by the mouth of the "river into the open sea.

"Three of the pirates' came out to meet the king's "ships, whilst the three other piratical vessels were stand- "ing upwards above the mouth of the river on dry land; "as their crews had gone off and were on shore. Of the "three first pirate ships, the king's war vessels took two "outside of the mouth of the river, and slew the men. "The third vessel veered off; but all the men in her were "slain but five, and even these were severely wounded.

"Then came the time for battle with those who manned "the other ships, and all of which were in an awkward "position; for, whilst there were three on one side of the "sea, where the Danish ships were aground, there were

* This statement, made upon such unquestionable authority as that of the *Saxon Chronicle*, of the superiority in ship-building of Alfred, is a sufficient reply to the assertion of Mr. Laing, that Alfred was indebted to the Danes, for the improvements that took place in the construction of his vessels of war. See *Chronicles of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. pp. 130, 140.

"three others on the opposite side of the same ships, but "none of the three on both sides could give aid to their "associates, because the water had ebbed away from the "three English ships (on the land side). The Danes "seeing this, passed from their own to the three English "ships that were be-ebbed (on the land side), and fought "with them.

"In this conflict was slain Lucomen, the king's reeve, "and Wulfheard, a Frieslander; Ebb, a Frieslander, and "Ethelferth, the king's neat-herd. The number of Fries-"landers and Englishmen slain, was sixty-two,* and of "the Danes, one hundred and twenty men.

"Whilst the conflict was going on, the tide reached the "Danish ships, and on this the Danes retreated to them, "and before the Christians could shove theirs into deep "water, the Danes had rowed away; but so crippled were "they, that they could not row them beyond the coast of "Sussex, where two of them were driven on shore, the "crew captured, led as prisoners to the king at Winchester, "and by him ordered to be hanged.†

"As to the Danes in the single remaining vessel, they,

---

* "Ex familia regis quadraginta duo milites ceciderunt." Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 366.

† "Et in patibulo suspenduntur." F. Wigorn, p, 597. See S. Durham, p. 151. This was the most mild species of punishment inflicted by the Northmen on their unfortunate captives in war. Their conduct in England, for many years had been that which distinguished them in 890 and 891, in Aquitaine and Britanny: "Multaque depopulatione terram devastant; abducunt viros ac mulieres puerosque; quorum *provectiores in utroque sexu* obtruncant; pueros servituti mancipant, feminas vero quæ formosæ videbantur ————." Richer, lib. i. c. 6.

"although severely wounded, effected their escape to East "Anglia.

"That self-same year, the Danes lost on the southern "coast of England, not less than twenty ships, and the "men withal."*

During the remainder of the king's reign, he was able to govern his lands in the most perfect peace, to devote his time to the repairing of churches, to the bestowal of alms, and to the formation of laws, which should repress and punish the rapacity of the avaricious, and afford protection to the pious, the peaceful, the virtuous and the loyal.†

In the course of this year (897), died Wulfric, the king's horse thane, who was also viceroy of Wales.‡

---

* *Saxon Chronicle,* INGRAM'S *translation,* pp. 121, 124, with a few verbal alterations.

† ROG. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 366. Under the date 897, it is stated by this author, that Alfred for the better repelling the invasions of the Danes, appointed guardians of the kingdom "custodes regni." The accuracy of this assertion is however controverted by Mr. Coxe, see vol. i. p. 362, note 2, (E.H.S.)

‡ *Sax. Chron.* This incident is particularly deserving of notice as shewing that Alfred was acknowledged as the supreme sovereign of Wales, "Hemeid * Houil * et Brochmâil * expetivere regem, ut dominium et defensionem ab eo pro inimicis suis haberent." ASSER, ad an. 885. *Vit.*, p. 15.

"Vassals of the king, without being the inferiors of the other subjects over whom he ruled, they were dependent upon the Anglo Saxon Basileus, but not the serfs of the English. Cambria and Cumbria still existed as distinct kingdoms, though governed by princes who bent before the throne of the paramount lord of the Isle of Britain." PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth,* vol. i. p. 570. Same vol. pp. 407, 410.

The facts are scarcely deserving of being mentioned in the text

In the year 901, expired Alfred, the son of Ethelwulf, six nights before the mass of All Saints.*

Alfred, the truth-teller;† he, who was in battle most valiant, in peace most prudent, in all that pertained to religion most pious, did, to the great grief of all his subjects, depart this life on the 26th October, and was interred with a truly regal and therefore befitting pomp, in the Church of St. Peter, prince of the apostles, at Winchester, where a magnificent monument of precious porphyry was erected to his honour.‡

---

which are given by the *Saxon Chronicle*, under the date 898, viz. "the deaths of Ethelm, ealdorman of Wiltshire, and Heahston bishop of London;" and by the *Chronicle of Peterborough*, in the year 900, viz. "that several nobles and bishops of England, died in the course of the year."

* *Sax. Chronicle.*

† "Alfredus veredictus." ASSER.

‡ ASSER, *Annal.*, pp. 172, 173. "Afterwards his body was taken up from thence and buried in the abbey of Hyde, without the gates of Winchester." SPELMAN'S *Life of King Alfred*, book iii. § 107, p. 217.

The cause of this removal is stated by William of Malmsbury, namely, that it was foolishly reported by the canons, that the body of the king wandered nightly through the monastery in which it had been interred.

"Regios manes resumpto cadavere noctibus per domos oberrare." (*Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 124.) He adds that the English people, with an almost instinctive credulity, believed in those superstitions, which were manifestly borrowed from the Pagans. He quotes the *Æneid*, lib. x. v. 641, to shew what was the superstitious belief of the Pagans. "The popular notion was, that the devil re-animated the corpse, and played a variety of pranks by its agency, and that the only remedy was to dig up and consume the body by fire. See *Will. Neubrig.* 5. 22." SHARPE'S *Translation of Malmsbury*, p. 140, note 7.

This "popular notion," or rather vile superstition, was introduced into England by the Pagan Northmen. It is thus distinctly described by Torfæus—"Malos homines et facinorosos post mor-

Alfred had reigned for eight and twenty years and a half, over all England, (with the exception of those parts held by the Danes), when the arrow of death struck him down.*

Alfred, famous, heroic, victorious, the protector of widows, the guardian of orphans, the careful almoner of the hungry, of the naked and of the forlorn — he, who was of Saxon poets the most skilful—to his people most dear; to all affable, with all generous: possessing in a pre-eminent degree prudence, fortitude, justice and temperance: he, who was in the enforcement of the administration of the laws careful, anxious, scrupulous, and who, in the service of God, ever exhibited an untiring zeal, and an exhaustless devotion; he who

---

tem velut redivivos grassari, et plurimis præsertim quibus ultionem minati sunt, nocere." There were two modes of preventing wicked dead from troubling the living—1st, either burning their bodies and casting the ashes into a running stream, "combustio, cinerumque in aquam projectio;" or secondly, that adopted by *An* towards the robber *Garan*, "caput deinde præcidit, interque femora collocavit." These superstitions survived the introduction of Christianity, and they even outlived that change in the Northern countries in Europe, which is designated "the religious reformation,"—a fact, which is attested by Torfæus himself—"nec dum apud rude vulgus satis extirpata." *Hist. Norveg.*, lib. 7, § 4, c. 5, vol. i. pp. 330, 331. For other superstitions respecting the dead, see lib. 9, c. 31, vol. i. pp. 401, 402.

* H. Hunt., lib. v. p. 352. This author adds some verses upon the death of Alfred, of which a most barbarous translation will be found in Spelman's *Life of Alfred*, p. 218. Even the following lines of Robert of Brunne, are musical, when compared with the metrical version of Spelman:

"Sex and fifty batailes Alfred ouercam,
"After nyen and tuenty yere the dede him hithen nam,
"And sex moneths mo, thus the story said,
"At Wynchestre in toumbe in the abbay is he laid."

Peter Langtoft's *Chronicle*, vol. i. p. 26.

was the pious son of a pious father, died on a Thursday, the fifth of the kalends of November, and his body being buried in the new church of Winchester, he awaits the stole of immortality and the glory of resurrection with the just.*

Say reader, now, a prayer with me—"Oh! Christ! our "Redeemer, grant unto his soul salvation!"†

---

* F. WIGORN, p. 598.

† "Dic modo lector, Christe redemptor animam ejus salve." ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 3, p. 847. For other and more elaborate eulogies upon the character of Alfred, see INGULPHUS, p. 28. ROGER DE HOVEDEN, pp. 417, 421. ROG. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 367. W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 121, 123. R. HIGDEN, *Polychron*, lib. vi. p. 259. WALLINGFORD · *Chron.*, pp. 535, 537. S. DUNELM, pp. 18, 23, 73, 122, 151. ETHELRED, ABB. RIEVELLANS, pp. 352, 355. R. DE DICET, p. 451. BROMTON, pp. 809, 812, 814, 816, 818, 819. HARPSFIELD, *Hist. Eccles. Ang., Non. Sæc.*, c. 4, 5, 6, pp. 158—164. POLYDOR. VERGIL., *Ang. Hist.*, lib. v. pp. 105, 108. DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. i. pp. 190, 507, vol. ii. pp. 315, 402, 451, 471.

The best eulogium that can be pronounced upon Alfred, will be found in the recital of some of the provisions of his will, proving his Christian piety, his respect for the church, his reverence for its holy priests and bishops, his love for the poor, and his anxiety to preserve the blessings of freedom to those who had been slaves, and were indebted to him for their enfranchisement. See *Testamentum Ælfredi Regis*, in CAMDEN *Anglica, Normanica, &c.* pp. 22, 23, 24. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 81, 82, 83. LINGARD'S *History of England*, vol. i. p. 188.

THE LAWS OF KING ALFRED.

In drawing attention to the laws of King Alfred, it is our intention to fix the observation of the reader, upon such portions of the wise monarch's dooms only as affected the slave-class in his dominions. For this purpose, we use the valuable compilation of Mr. Thorpe, "The Ancient Laws and Institutes of England, published under the direction of the Commissioners on Public Records." We follow the translation of Mr. Thorpe in many instances, but not in all, as it is not necessary, in a work intended for the perusal of those who are unskilled in the law, to give a verbatim version.

A law-book should be plain and distinct in all cases; but there are some subjects, with regard to which an author would be wrong in using the same language which the law maker is bound to employ. We take care however, by quoting the paragraph and the page, to enable any person perusing the work, to consult the original with facility.

The following are the portions of Alfred's laws affecting the slave class:—

§ 11. "If any one buy a Christian born-slave, (*theow*) let him serve vi years; *the seventh he shall be free without purchase.* With such raiment as he went in, with such go he out. If he have a wife of his own, go she out with him. If however, the lord have given him a wife, be she and her child the lord's. But if the 'theow' should say I will not from my lord, nor from my wife, nor from my child, '*nor from my goods;*' let his lord then bring him to the door of the temple, (*temples dura*), and bore his ear through with an awl, in token that he ever after shall be a theow," pp. 20, 21.

§ 12. "Though any one sell his daughter to servitude, let her not be altogether such a 'theowa' as other female slaves are. He ought not to sell her away among a strange folk. But if he who bought her reck not of her, let her go free among a strange folk." In certain cases, a man who had done wrong, is bound to marry a female slave, and to bestow on her, as if she were a free maiden a dowry, and in case of failure, the slave to obtain her freedom. p. 21.

§ 15. "He who stealeth a freeman, and selleth him, and it be proved against him so that he cannot clear himself, let him perish by death," p. 21.

§ 17. "A person killing his female or male slave by a blow, the guilt of blood to rest upon him," p. 22.

§ 18. "A protection afforded to female slaves when about to become mothers," p. 22.

§ 20. "If any one smite out the eye of his male or female slave, and he make them one eyed, let him free them on this account. And if he smite out a tooth, let him do the like," p. 22.

§ 21. "If an ox cause by goring the death of a slave, let xxx shillings of silver be given, and let the ox be stoned, and its flesh not eaten," p. 22. (See WILKIN'S *Leges Anglo Saxones*, p. 39, note 8).

§ 24. "If any one steal another's ox, and slay or sell it, let him give two for it; and four sheep for one. If he have not what he may give, *be he himself sold for the cattle*," p. 23.

§ 25. "A protection given to female slaves," p. 35

§ 43. "To all freemen let these days be given, but not to theowmen, and esne workmen; xii days at Yule, and the day on which Christ overcame the devil, *and the commemoration day of St. Gregory*, and vii days before Easter, and vii days after, and one day at St. Peter's tide, and St. Paul's, and in harvest the whole week before St. Mary's Mass, and one day at the celebration of All-Hallows; and the iv Wednesdays in the iv Ember weeks. To all theowmen be given, to those to whom it may be most desirable to give, whatever any man shall give them in God's name, or they at any of these moments may deserve," pp. 40, 41. (See WILKIN'S *Leges Anglo-Saxones*, pp. 11, 15, 44, 84, 85, 101, 108, 123, 130, 140, 185, and as to the necessity of giving our modern poor holidays for the benefit of the working classes, restoring the old Catholic Saints' Days, so that they might have at least forty holidays in the year, see *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxxi, p. 390, Art. on Lord John Manners's "*Plea for National Holidays.*"

Copies of the laws of Alfred will be found in WILKIN'S *Leges Anglo Saxones*, pp. 28, 50. SPELMAN'S *Concilia*, vol. i. pp. 354, 375. LABBÆUS *Concilia*, vol. ix. pp. 379, 390, &c. &c. &c.

CHAPTER IV.

EDWARD THE ELDER.

EDWARD THE ELDER, elected as king. Distinction between his sovereignty and that of Alfred. Ethelwald Clito's rebellion, and sacrilegious marriage...his flight to the Danes, who make him their king. Edward's love of pious persons. St. Grimbald's discourse with King Edward. A new monastery (Newminster) built in Winchester. Immigration of priests and other pious persons from France. Relics of Saints carried with them. Irruption of the Danes into Mercia..The rebel Prince Ethelwald slain in battle. Victories obtained by Edward in the year 907. The relics of St. Oswald removed from Bardney, by Æthelfleda, daughter of King Alfred. The virtues and prudence of Æthelfleda, as a female and a sovereign. Ravages by the Danes, in 911..Severe punishment inflicted on them by Edward. Death of the husband of Æthelfleda. Invasion of Wales, by Æthelfleda..Brecknock stormed and a Welsh queen taken prisoner. Piratical invasion in 918. A Welsh bishop taken prisoner, and ransomed by Edward. The pirates defeated and the remnant compelled to abandon the dominions of Edward. Æthelfleda takes Derby by storm..The Danes of Leicester and York submit to her. Æthelfleda dies at Tamworth, and is interred at Gloucester. Deposition of the Princess Alf-

winna, by her uncle Edward. Repeated rebellions of the Danes in 918. The Danes in various places submit to Edward. Submission to Edward of the kings of North Wales. The Danes in Northumbria. The blasphemies of the infidel Onlafbald punished by a miracle. The Scotch, Danes, and Strathcluydians submit to Edward. The dying admonition of Edward to his son and successor. The death of Edward. The daughter of Edward, Edgiva, married to the King of France. Two daughters of Edward become nuns.. other daughters married to the Emperor of Germany.. the Duke of Aquitaine, and the King of Arles. Education of the daughters and sons of Edward. The king's daughter.. Saint Edburga receives her vocation in her infancy. Miracles attest her sanctity. The laws of King Edward.

CHAPTER IV.

EDWARD THE ELDER.

A.D. 901—925.

THE successor to the monarchy of Alfred was his son Edward, who was elected by the great men of the kingdom, and crowned with the royal diadem on the day of Pentecost, in that year which completed a century from the time that his great-grandsire Egbert had governed those states over which he was now destined to reign.*

Edward, whose coronation as King of England, took place in the year 901, was the eldest son of Alfred, and of him it might be said that he was inferior to his father in

---

* ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 4, p. 847. His words are: "Successor equidem tum Monarchiæ Eadwerdus post filius supra memoravi regis coronatur ipse stemate regali *a primatis electus* Pentecostes in die —"

"After the death of Ælfred, the voices of the Witan called to the vacant throne his eldest son Eadward * * * By some, the conveyance of the whole kingdom to the son of a younger brother, was regarded as a violation of the rights of Æthelwold, the son of Ælfred's elder brother Æthelred." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 85.

scholarship, equal to him in power, and superior to him in dignity ;* for although Alfred had united together the two kingdoms of the Mercians and the West Saxons, still he was but nominally the sovereign of the former, as the controul and power over them were confided to the ealdorman Ethered, whilst Edward, upon the death of Ethered, united Mercia with his dominions, and was not long in subduing as foes, and forcing to yield obedience as subjects, the West and East Angles,† the Northumbrians, who had previously confederated as a nation with the Danes, the Scotch who occupied the northern part of the island, and finally all the Britons, who are now generally designated, as the Welsh.‡ In none of his conflicts with these various persons, was he ever doomed to find himself compelled to acknowledge that he was their inferior.§ He also is entitled to the merit of having invented an expedient, by which he rendered of no avail the hostile forays of the Danes. The expedient consisted in the establishment at proper positions of numerous towns—either ancient cities which were repaired by him, as places of defence, or the foundation of new, that were at once filled by him with military detachments, and that thus served as a protection to the inhabitants, whilst they were always prepared to

---

* Roo. de Wend., vol. i. p. 367.

† "Meaning probably the people of Essex, or East Saxons." Hardy, (W. Malmsb. vol. i. p. 195, note 2,) E.H.S.

‡ W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § 125.

§ "Nec unquam in aliqua pugna humiliorem manum habuerit." W. Malmsb.

"He com neuer to bataile, that he ne had the maistrie."

Peter Langtoft's *Chron.* Edwardus Primus, vol. i. p. 27. (Hearne.)

repulsed the foe.* This proved to be no vain and fruitless device; for it tended so much to invigorate the valour of the rural population, that if they chanced to hear that enemies were marching to attack them, they waited neither for orders from the king, nor commanders, but readily rushed forward to battle with their foes; and doing so, ever proved that they were not only superior to their assailants in numbers, but even in military skill. By such policy on the part of the king, and with such bravery in his fighting men, the foes to both became an object of contempt to the former, and of ridicule to the latter.†

No sooner had Edward been raised to the throne, than Ethelwald Clito, his uncle's son, believing that he was the equal by royal descent, and not the inferior in power to him who was his sovereign, determined upon putting forth all the strength he could command, in order that he might secure for himself the crown. In pursuance of this design, he attacked the royal vills of Twineham and Winburne—and, though the gates were closed against him, he audaciously burst through them and brought his

* "That these fortifications were equal to their object, is evident from the fact, that not one of them was ever captured by the enemy; and they were productive, in after ages, of consequences which this monarch could not possibly have foreseen. They were long the principal towns in England, and served to multiply a class of men of a higher order, and distinguished by greater privileges than the ceorles or husbandmen. To the burghers was intrusted the defence of their walls, and of the adjacent country. By living in society, and having arms in their hands, they grew into consideration, and insensibly acquired such a degree of power and wealth, as ultimately to open to their representatives the national council, and thus lay the foundation of that influence, which the people enjoy in our present constitution." LINGARD'S *History of England*, vol. i. p. 194.

† "Ita hostes militibus contemptui, regi risui erant." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 125. See F. WIGORN, p. 598.

adherents along with him.* This he did, without the leave of the king and of his Witan.†

It was in Winburne, that St. Cuthburga, the sister of King Ina had established a monastery for maidens, whose lives were to be devoted to the service of God.‡ One of these nuns was with violent hands laid hold of by Ethelwald,§ and united to him in marriage.

King Edward, upon ascertaining the facts relative to the audacious attempt of Ethelwald, collected a large army, and marched as far as Bardney, which is a short distance from Winburne, and there pitched his tents.‖ On the instant he sent his commands to Ethelwald, that he should, without a moment's delay, abandon the place.¶ To this the reply of Ethelwald was :—"that there would "he live, or there would he die."**

It was a poor and empty boast; for such was his fear of the number of the king's army, that as soon as the night set in, he took to flight, and sought for safety in Northumbria, where he entreated of the Danes, that they would receive him not as one who came to have command over them as a general, but to fight with them as a fellow soldier.†† The Danes however, received the youthful and royal transfuge with joy—they even went so far as to

* Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 367. See F. Wigorn, p. 598. See as to Winburne, Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 88, 89.

† *Saxon Chronicle*, a.d. 901.

‡ Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 367.

§ "Unam abusive rapiens." Rog. de Wend.

‖ Rog. de Wend., vol. i. pp. 367, 368.

¶ F. Wigorn, p. 598.

** *Sax. Chron.*, a.d. 901.

†† "Danos exposcit, ut non tam ducem se quam commilitionem recipiant." F. Wigorn, p. 598.

appoint him their king—the leader of all their vikings and jarls.*

King Edward lamented to hear of the flight of his foe —he felt the escape of such a person as a wrong done to himself, and therefore sent in immediate pursuit of the fugitive ;† but as soon as he learned that it was impossible to overtake Ethelwald, and that the nun had been captured, who had without his sanction, or the license of the bishops, been made a wife by Ethelwald, he ordered her to be restored to her monastery at Winburne.‡

The glorious King Edward was animated with the desire of following in all things the footsteps of his father—and especially to love, as his father had loved all men of stainless reputation, and to respect as his father had respected those who proved themselves worthy and pious in the performance of their ecclesiastical functions.§ To this

---

* "Illi vero nobiliati juvenis congaudentes constituerunt eum regem, et principem super reges et duces suos." H. HUNT., lib. v. p. 352.

† The words of Malmsbury would intimate that sentence of banishment had been pronounced by the Witan upon Ethelwald— "A proceribus, qui fide obstricti fuerant, in exilium trusus." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 125. Ethelwald was at the moment guilty of many crimes—of treason against his sovereign, and of a double sacrilege, in taking a nun from her convent, and abusing the sacrament of marriage. In the reign of Alfred, laws had been passed for the protection of nuns, see DOOMS. 8, 18. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, pp. 30, 32, (folio edition.) It was not until the reign of Ethelred, and England had been demoralised by the Danes, that it became necessary to pass a law prohibiting persons from imitating the crime of Ethelwald, c. vi. § 12. THORPE, p. 136.

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 598. See *Sax. Chron.* ad an. 901.

§ *Annales de Hyda*, as quoted in ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Anglican*, vol. iii. p. 204, § 7.

sovereign, the holy and glorious priest of Christ Grimbald approached, and thus humbly and wisely, and as it would seem, under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, admonished him as to the propriety of building a monastery.

"My lord and king, although your father imposed upon "me as a duty, that I should be your councillor and friend, "as long as I was also his, still no overweening confidence "has ever been inspired into my heart, by reason of such "an injunction. So far from it, that I now place myself "prostrate at your feet, and humbly beseech of you—all "powerful and supreme as you are—that you will be "pleased to grant me your permission, that I may return to "my own monastery—to that which it was the goodness "of God first to assign me."

As soon as the most pious king heard these words addressed to him, he groaned in spirit, and with his face bathed in tears, he prayed and adjured Grimbald, that he should never, whilst he lived, abandon him—promising, that as far as regarded the Church of God, he would bestow upon it larger and richer gifts than ever had been conferred by his father, and that he would, to the utmost of his power, improve its condition. When the holy man heard the king give expression to such sentiments as these, he felt unwilling to outrage his pious feelings, or to offend his dignity by a refusal, and he therefore promised that he would remain in England, on condition that there should be allocated to himself, absolutely, and as in his own right, so much land in the city of Winchester, as would be suited for the building of a monastery, which might be regarded as worthy of the Deity in whose honour it was to be erected; for he said, that what he most wished to enjoy, was the

supreme peace which a well-ordered confraternity of monks could alone confer upon him.

Tears of joy burst from the eyes of the king, as soon as he heard that Grimbald was willing to remain, and he at once declared that there should be taken even by force, so much land from the old monastery as might be necessary for the establishment of the new. The pious soul of Grimbald was shocked at such a proposition—he prohibited anything like that being done, declaring that God never would receive as an acceptable sacrifice to him, whatever was the result of rapine.*

The work which the venerable Grimbald had wished to be undertaken was commenced. He gave to it all his energies, for he longed to finish it, because it was his desire in that place, to serve his God with holy prayers and laudable acts; and, because it was from that place he hoped that he might be raised by his Judge, and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to a crown of justice. Hence, vast numbers of artisans and workmen were collected by him; the foundations were laid; the work once begun was hurried on as speedily as possible, and in two years, that which is wonderful to be told, and difficult to be believed, even when seen, it was perfectly completed! The king meanwhile bestowed upon the holy abbot a large sum of money and costly gifts of various kinds, both in gold and silver.†

---

* *Annales de Hyda,* as quoted in ALFORD, vol. iii. pp. 204, 205, § 7, 8.

† Ibid., p. 205, § 10. In giving this extract, it is to be observed, that Alford (Griffiths,) repudiates (vol. iii. p. 205, § 11, and p. 207, § 16, 17,) the charters that are inserted in the Annals

In the year 902, was fought a great battle between the men of Kent, and the Danes at Holme.*

The same year died Ethelswitha, the mother of King Edward.†

In the course of the year 903, occurred the deaths of Ethelwulf, the brother of Queen Ethelswitha, and of Vi-

---

of Hyde. See as to the new monastery at Winchester. BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. vii. p. 34, and vol. xii. p. 1059.

The reasons for establishing monasteries at this period, are stated on two different occasions: "pro rege Missarum celebratione, et votivas orationes, pro statu regni, pro pace et tranquillitate illorum," and again, "ut omni anno, festivitate cunctorum sanctorum, decem pauperes in pane, et lucubrato, pulmentoque saginato, adactis optimis haustibus, pascat." ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 207, § 16, p. 235, § 7.

The results of the religious "reformation," upon the New Minster of St. Grimbald are thus described in Camden:

"Newminster was at first only a house and chapel for *the learned monk* Grimbald. * * * Edward erected it, A.D. 901. * * * It was removed by Henry I, 1100, to Hide, and was a mitred abbey, with a revenue of £865 per annum. In this church was buried the illustrious Alfred, and many more Saxon kings and bishops. *At present the bare site remains, deformed with heaps of ruins, daily dug up to burn into lime!*" CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 196.

* *Sax. Chron.* The Rev. Mr. Ingram, in his edition of the Saxon Chronicle suggests that the place where this battle was fought was at Holmsdale in Surrey, and justifies the suggestion by quoting the proverb:

"This Holmsdale
"Never conquer'd, never shall." p. 125, note 3.

Ethelwerd's description of this battle is poetical: "conjiciunt peltas, enses vibrant, in utraque manu crispatur hastilis crebro." Lib. iv. c. 4, p. 848.

† *Sax. Chron.* See Rev. Dr. Giles' edition in BOHN'S *Antiquarian Library*, p. 367. "The Benedictine nunnery of St. Mary, founded by Alswitha, wife of Alfred, A.D. 900, and valued at £179, *is now reduced to a single heap of stones.*" CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 196. See S. DUNELM, ad an. 905, p. 152. ETHELRED, *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, p. 356. F. WIGORN, p. 599, ad an. 905.

gilius, the abbot of the Scots, as well as of the mass-priest St. Grimbald.*

This same year was consecrated the new monastery of Winchester, upon the advent of St. Judoc.†

At this time, it was, that the devil, envying the happiness of the church, and the sins of the inhabitants who dwelt in the district of Pontieu requiring chastisement, the evil spirit was permitted to send upon their land bands of infidels to infest it.‡ In this invasion cities were destroyed, monasteries annihilated, churches burned, and the entire province depopulated. The tillers of the land fled from it; the former owners forsook it, and bore away with them in their flight, the relics and memorials § of saints. Some of its noble laymen, of its wisest priests, as well the monks of various monasteries, came like swarms of bees, to the coasts of England and clustered around St. Grimbald. Amongst the other relics that were brought by them from across the sea, were the most sacred remains of the Confessor, St. Judoc. These were presented to the Very Reverend Father Grimbald, and he, accompanied by a most magnificent cortege of the clergy, and a numberless crowd of the faithful, very joyfully received them, and deposited them in the new monastery, the building of which he had then completed. In that monastery great

---

* *Sax. Chron.*, A.D. 903.

† Ibid.

‡ *Annales Wintonien.* as quoted in ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Anglican.*, vol. iii. p. 209, § 7.

§ "Pignora." *Annales Wintonien.* The following extract from St. Gregory of Tours, will shew what is the proper signification to give to this word. "Cumque *sacrosancta pignora*, pallis ac mappis exornata in excelsum deferremus." *De Gloria Confessor.* c. 20.

and fitting honours long continued to be paid to them by the people. The merits of the saint (Judoc) in the sight of God, are proved by the incidents of his most valued life, as they are described in writings; whilst the presence of his most sacred relics in the monastery has been attested by the miracles which the Divine Goodness, through them, was pleased to operate.*

——

* *Annales Wintonien*, as quoted in ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 209. § 7. A portion of the words used in these English annals deserve quotation "——permisit Deus territorium Pontivorum flagellari incursionibus inimicorum. In qua incursione, urbes destructæ, monasteria eversa, et Ecclesiæ incensæ, et provincia est depopulata. Quapropter cultores terræ fugerunt, et terram derelinquentes, reliquias et pignora Sanctorum secum asportaverunt."

The above quotation from the annals of Winchester will be found strongly corroborated by the annexed extract :—

"Iterum Normanni, junctis sibi Danis, Franciam et Lotharingiam pervagantes, Ambianum, Attrebatum, Corbeiam, Tornacum, Cameracum, Terruanum, *terrasque Pontivorum*, Menapiorum, omnemque terram circa fluvium Scaldim, *Monasteria* S.S. *Walarici* et Richarii, et *alia multa* per patriam ferro et igne vastarunt; totam Batuam, Palatium Neomagi, et Treverim incendunt, et Metis usque protendunt: ubi conserto prælio Christiani vincuntur, Walo Metensis episcopus interficitur. Clerus et Monachi, ac utriusque sexûs Ecclesiarum ministri, ubi poterant opportunius, habitabant, et *Sanctorum pignora locis tutioribus abscondebant.*" *Chron Sithiens, S. Bertin*, ad an., 881, 882. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix. p. 70, and as a proof of the veneration for the relics of another of the saints removed at this period, see *Historia Relationis corporis S. Walarici*, pp. 147, 148, 149.

The statement in the Winchester annals seems to find confirmation in the words of the *Saxon Chronicle*. "This ylcan geares was gehalgod Niwe-mynster on Win-ceaster and S. Judoces cyme."

St. Grimbald, it appears, according to the annals of Hyde, intended to have placed monks in his monastery instead of those who are designated by the annalist, "inertem turbam nobilium clericorum;" but the pious abbot did not survive the dedication of his new minster more than four weeks. See ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 211. § 8, 9.

In the year 904 * Ethelwald collected a large force, and with an immense fleet landed upon the coast of Essex, whose inhabitants immediately submitted to him.† And, in the course of the following year (905), the Danes, who dwelt in East Anglia, upon the promise that they should receive their due share of whatever plunder might be obtained, were persuaded by Ethelwald to unite with him in a hostile invasion of the lands of the Mercians.‡

The leaders of this expedition were the kings Eohric and Ethelwald, who intent upon spoil burst through the Mercian boundaries, cut down all they met with the sword, destroyed what they could not carry away with fire, and thus proceeded until they came to Creccanford (Cricklade), at which place they crossed the Thames, and then advancing as far as that spot, which is called in Saxon the Wood of Bradon, they desolated with all the horrors of war the circumjacent villages, seizing as they went along all things that could be borne off by them.§ At length, satiated with a superabundance of spoil, they turned their thoughts to their own homes; and in great glee prepared to return thither. Their joy was but short-lived; for the invincible king Edward had collected in all haste an army, a part of which moved in their rear, whilst the other laid waste the lands of the Danes in all that district of country which lies between the dikes of St. Edmund's kingdom, and the river Ouse. The king having thus wasted the lands of his foes, determined upon retiring, and in doing

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† H. Hunt., p. 352.

‡ F. Wigorn, p. 598.

§ Ibid., p. 599.

so commanded that his entire army should retrace its steps at the same time with himself. The men of Kent disregarded this order—they remained at the spot to which they had advanced, and resolved upon making good their position, although the king sent seven distinct messages to them, commanding them to return. They, however, felt no fear of their foes; for, as they had begun, so did they calmly and courageously resolve to persevere. The Danes, upon hearing of this dogged determination on the part of the men of Kent, united all their forces together, made a sudden and unexpected attack upon them—and that attack led to a desperate battle, in which great numbers fell on both sides.* There were killed upon the king's side, the ealdormen Siwalf and Sigelm, the king's thane Eadwold, the abbot Kenwulf, Sigebriht the son of Siwulf, Eadwald the son of Acca, and more along with them; though it is to be observed, that these were the personages of most importance who were slain: whilst on the part of the Danes were slain their king Eohric, the Etheling Ethelwald, who had tempted them to involve themselves in these hostilities, Byrtsige, the son of the Etheling Brihtnold, the hold† Ysop, the hold Oskytel, and vast

* F. Wigorn, p. 599.

† "*Hold*—O. N. Hölldr. In its old Norse acceptation, this title is defined by Biörn Halderson as *dominus fundi aviti* vel *allodialis*. The Index to the Grágás describes a 'höldr' as *colonus odalicus* vel *fundum avitum* tenens. From the amount of his Wergild, which is double that of a priest or a thane, it is evident that he enjoyed a very high rank in the state. The title was most probably introduced by the Danes, and limited to East Anglia." Thorpe, Glossary to *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*. "The Holds were numerous in Northumbria, and in Latin docu-

numbers of men of rank whose names cannot now be recited.*

There was a great slaughter of fighting men on both sides; but the Danes in this respect suffered the most, although they obtained the victory.†

---

ments are termed *duces*. Their rank may be inferred from their Wergild (4000 thrymsas) which was half that of an ealdorman, and double that of a thane." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 87, note 2. See DUGANGE in verb. *Holdes*.

* *Sax. Chron.*, ad an. 905.

† H. HUNT., p. 352. Ethelwerd declares that in this battle most of the leading men of Kent were destroyed, "tota pars Cantiæ nobilitatis pæne." p. 848.

According to Roger de Wendover (vol. i. p. 371), there was held in this year (905), and according to William of Malmsbury in the year 904, (*Gest. Reg, Ang.*, lib. ii. § 129) a council in England, over which presided Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, in accordance with a letter from Pope Formosus, respecting the scandal of the West Saxon district, having been left for seven years without bishops. The result is stated by these authors to have been the appointment of seven bishops. This statement has led to a great deal of controversy. See SPELMAN'S *Concilia*, vol. i. pp. 387, 388, 389. WILKINS' *Concilia*, vol. i. p. 201, *Anglia Sacra*, vol. i. pp. 554, 555. HARDY, (W. MALMSB., vol. i. p. 203, note 3), E.H.S. ALFORD, *Annal. Ang. Eccles.*, vol. iii. p. 210. § 2, 3, pp. 212. 213, 214. § 1.—9, pp. 215, 216, § 1, 2, 3. There can, we think, be no doubt that on this point Malmsbury and those who followed him fell into a mistake—although as it is fairly and candidly remarked by the Rev. G. Sharpe, in his translation of the monk of Malmsbury, he is not censurable for its errors, "as this story of Pope Formosus and the seven bishops is to be found, nearly verbatim, in a MS. (Bodley, 579), which was given to the cathedral of Exeter, by Bishop Leofric, who died A.D. 1073." SHARPE'S *Translation of Malmsbury*, p. 146. The misstatement of Malmsbury and others, was manifestly a misapprehension of what really did occur, and which is thus clearly stated by Dr. Lingard:—

"During his" (Edward's) "reign an important alteration was effected in the ecclesiastical economy of the kingdom of Wessex. The frequent wars which had preceded the restoration of Alfred,

In the year 927, the glorious king Edward collected together an immense army, by means of which he rendered subject to his crown, Essex, East Anglia, Mercia, Northumbria, and many more provinces, of which the Danes had, for a considerable period of time, possessed themselves, as if they were its lords, and from whom he by force of arms extorted the abjuration of their supremacy. He also took under his protection the kings of the Scotch, of the Cumbrians, and of the Galloways,* and so doing he returned with equal honour and glory to his own dominions.†

---

had caused a relaxation of discipline, and, in many places, had revived the superstitions of paganism. Pope Formosus sought by threats and exhortations to awaken the zeal of the West Saxon prelates, and suggested the propriety of increasing the number of their bishoprics. About the year 910 the two churches of Winchester and Sherborne became vacant, and Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, improved the opportunity to make a new division of the kingdom, and to establish three more dioceses for the counties of Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall." LINGARD'S *History of England*, vol. i. p. 194. See LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 98.

* See CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. iv. p. 68, et sequent. (Gough). "Gallovidia hæc suos olim Principes et Dominos habuit." (Edit. 1600).

† ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 373. "No notice of these expeditions occurs in the other historians." COXE. Although not to be found in other historians, it is not inconsistent with the subsequent events in the reign of Edward. It seems even to find considerable confirmation in the words used by Florence of Worcester: "Paganorum exercitus de Est Anglia et Northumbria, *invictum esse regem Eadwardum* scientes, pacem cum eo faciunt loco Ittingaford (Ickford) dicitur," p. 599. See also *Sax. Chron.*, A.D. 907. A copy of the Saxon Chronicle, (see LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 87, note 3, and GILES'S edition of *Sax. Chronicle*, p. 308, A.D. 906), both however state that King Edward's truce with the Danes was forced on him by necessity. See S. DUNELM, p. 133, also confirmatory of the latter statement. The Saxon Chronicle adds that in this year the city of Chester was rebuilt.

In the year 909,* the relics of St. Oswald king and martyr, were with all due reverence removed from Bardney, and borne to Mercia.† They were removed thither by Æthelfleda the daughter of king Alfred, and by her husband Ethered who then ruled over Mercia, and by whom had been built in the city of Gloucester, a monastery, in which these relics were placed.‡ No expense was spared in building this monastery, and its inmates were by the generosity of its donors plentifully supplied with all the necessaries of life.§ It was a monastery which flourished until the time of the Danes, and was connected

---

See F. WIGORN, ad an. 908. BROMTON states a curious fact with respect to a famine in Ireland this year, which he says was caused by double-teethed worms like in form to moles, that fell from the skies and destroyed the entire harvest; but that they were got rid of by fasting and prayers "oratione et jejunio." *Chron.*, p. 832.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 374.

‡ W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. iv. p. 283. See DUGDALE's *Monasticon*, vol. vi. pp. 82, 83.

In this veneration for the relics of saints, the reader will remark that the courageous, and wise princess Æthelfleda was an imitator of her father Alfred, (see pp. 168, 248, in this volume), that she acted upon the precept laid down for the English by the prince, and saint, Archbishop Egbert. ("Ut unusquisque sacerdos ecclesiam suam cum omni diligentia ædificet; et *reliquias sanctorum* cum summo studio vigiliarum noctis, et divinis officiis conservet."—Excerptiones Egberti. THORPE. *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, p. 326); that she did what certainly has been repudiated by the reformers of the sixteenth century, but which up to their time, and to this moment had been, and is the practice of the Catholic church. See ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, *Exposition and Defence of all points of Faith*, pp. 416—419, § 29, 34. (DUFFY's *Edition* 1846.) LACTANTIUS, *Passio. S. Savini*, § 14. BALUZ. *Miscell.* vol. ii. p. 55, (Paris, 1679.)

§ "Nulla parcimonia sumptuum, nulla inopia victualium." MALMSB.

with the monastery of Malmsbury (as the archives of both prove) by the closest ties of affection.*

In the year 910 occurred the deaths of Frithestan, bishop of Winchester, and of Asser, bishop of Sherborne.†

The same year, in consequence of a departure by the Danes from the compact into which they had entered with him, the unconquerable king Edward, sent an army composed of West Saxons and of Mercians into Northumbria. This army was engaged for nearly forty days in laying the country waste—it slew a great many Danes—took a great many prisoners—brought back with it an immense spoil—and compelled the vikings and commanders, despite of their reluctance, to renew the treaty of peace which they had previously violated.‡

A great battle also took place this year at Toutenhall in the province of Stratford, between the Danes and the English, in which the latter were victorious.§

In this year also was built the fortress of Bramsbury by

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. iv. p. 283. He adds that in the time of Archbishop Turstan, when enlarging the foundations of the church, the bodies of its two founders Æthelfleda, and Ethered, were discovered interred in the southern porch:—"inventa sunt amborum conjugum in porticu Australi sepulchra, et corpora antiquam reverentiam prætendentia," p. 283. See also *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § 125.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ F. Wigorn, p. 599.

§ F. Wigorn, ad an. 911. *Sax. Chron.* 910.

Æthelfleda,* the sister of the king, and who was ever found an important and able ally to her royal brother—for she was a woman whose exhaustless courage won for her the admiration of her own countrymen, and inspired towards her the fear of their foes. This most valiant heroine—who, from the birth of her first, or rather her only child, had lived as if she were a holy widow—aided her brother by her prudent counsels; and conferred not less advantage than himself upon the country, by the number of towns she founded and built. In considering all she did, it might perhaps be difficult to determine whether we should attribute the fact of a woman being able to protect men at home, and affright men abroad, to the accident of fortune, or as the simple result of her own innate bravery of spirit.†

In the year 911, the Northumbrian Danes broke the truce to which they had bound themselves—treated with contempt the ordinances which king Edward and his Witan had imposed upon them, and plundered the land of the Mercians. The king, it seems, had then collected together one hundred ships,‡ mustered soldiers, embarked them on board his ships, and commanded them to sail round by the coast to Kent, where he intended to meet them.§ The Danes, supposing that the greatest portion of

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† W. Malmsb., lib. ii. § 125.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*

§ F. Wigorn, p. 599. Why was this large fleet collected by King Edward in a time of comparative tranquillity? This is a question to which Herr Lappenberg suggests an answer, namely, that it must have been destined for some foreign shore—either to aid the Frankish king to whom his daughter was subsequently mar-

the king's soldiers were on board his ships, believed they were scathless from any attack, and therefore free to

---

ried, against the attacks of the Northmen—or to aid the regent of Brittany whose lands were overrun about this time by the barbarians. See *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 88, 89, 90, and notes. The latter suggestion is strengthened by the *Chron. Namnetens*, in which will be found the expression not quoted by Herr Lappenberg, that about the year 912, the entire of Brittany was devastated by the Northmen—"totam Britanniam devasterunt." *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. viii; p. 276.

There are probabilities to support the suggestion of Herr Lappenberg; but may we not also suggest that there is a probability that this fleet was fitted out for the purpose of repelling an expected invasion of England by the Northmen? To meet and defeat them at sea as had been done in the reign of Alfred? Is not this equally probable when we find that the idea of an invasion of England was justly apprehended in the reign of Edward, as we may learn from the subsequent events in the year 918; and as, perhaps, it might be surmised from the following curious story which is told by one of the old monkish historians, as occurring in the reign of Edward the elder.

"Some say," observes the good abbot, from whom we quote, "that King Edward was, contrary to his usually decorous manner, once seen to smile, and as it appeared in a moment of abstraction, during the solemn celebration of Mass. The spectators were astonished at this, and at the first opportune moment enquired what could have been the cause of it. To these interrogatories the king gave the following answer.

"There was," said he, "a large band of Danes and Norwegians congregated together for the express purpose of coming upon a plundering expedition to England. An immense number of ships were all assembled together in the same port—the arms of the invaders had been piled; their provisions stored, and every thing prepared for their voyage. The period for their voyage had come—the sails were set, and the wind had filled the sails, when a man whose habitation was close to the port, passed from his house bearing in his hand a goblet brimming with mead, and invited the leaders of the expedition to drink with him. They smiled at his proposal—he pressed them to accept it; and at length affirming he would brand them with the basest of names, if they declined his invitation, he enticed them to come on shore. Cup then succeeded cup—the desire for drinking increased with its indulgence—drunk-

plunder wherever they wished.* They laid waste the lands of the Mercians on all sides, and penetrated as far into the country as the Avon, where that river marks the boundaries of the western Angles and the Mercians. They next passed into the western part of the province, and there effected a frightful devastation, and collected an immense spoil. At length they resolved upon returning home, and recrossed the Severn by a bridge, which is called Cantbricge.† As soon however as the king heard that the Danish army had marched out on a plundering expedition he sent the men of Wessex and of Mercia in pursuit of them. The king's soldiers first assailed the Danish forces in the rear.‡ A dreadful battle was then fought. The Lord afflicted the infidels with a most dire defeat. Many thousands of them perished by a bloody death—confusion

---

enness led to talking, talking to quarrelling, quarrelling roused the ire of the Danes, and impelled them to take up arms. Confusion, clamour, and strife prevailed amongst the guests, a blind and brutal madness urged on associate against associate, not knowing which it spared, and ignorant whom it struck. Some amid this mutual carnage were killed on the spot; others mortally wounded; some saved their lives by flying from the place; and the remainder taking to their ships sailed out of the port. All were, in fact, dispersed, and the object for which they had assembled, rendered abortive. This was the cause of my smiling, and all who hear it, will I hope smile with me. My hope is in God, that during my time England shall never feel the infliction of a foreign invasion.

"Mark then how strong was the divine light which illuminated the royal mind. It enabled Edward to see that which was far distant —passed over what was present, and looked into futurity." ETHELRED. ABB. RIEVAL. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, pp. 356, 357. This curious story will be found in other writers, and attributed to Edward the Confessor, see BROMTON, p. 949. KNYGHTON, p. 2330.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. iv. p. 848.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*

fell upon the hearts of their princes, and their prostrate bodies were first begrimed and then for ever mingled with the dust.* The place in which the Danes were overtaken on their return from their plundering expedition, is called by the Anglo Saxons 'Wodnesfeld;'† and there fell the king Eowils, and the king Healfdan;‡ the jarl Ohter, and the jarl Scurf; the hold Agmund, the hold Othulf, and the hold Benesing; Anlaf the dark, and the hold Thunferth, with Osferth the collector, and the hold Guthferth.§ A great victory was granted unto the servants of the Lord, and they praised the God of armies in hymns and canticles of joy.‖

In the year 912,¶ died Ethered, the viceroy of the Mercians—a man, who had ever been conspicuous for his probity. Upon his death, his wife Æthelfleda, the daughter of king Alfred, long governed in peace the entire province of the Mercians with the exception of the cities of London and Oxford, which were retained by king Edward under his immediate control.**

---

* H. HUNT., lib. v, pp. 352, 353.

† F. WIGORN, p. 599. "Wilmesford," BROMTON p. 833.

‡ Ethelwerd states there were three Danish kings killed in this battle, one of them being the celebrated Inguar, whose death he commemorates in the following strong language: "—nec non Igwar relicta tyrannide tum ad aulam properavit inferni." (p. 848). Ethelwerd, the reader will bear in mind, was not a monk. Florence of Worcester states that the kings, Eowils, and Healfdan, were brothers of Inguar, "fratres regis Hinguari." (p. 599). See PONTOPIDDAN, *Gesta Danorum*, vol. ii. p. 67.

§ *Sax. Chron.*

‖ H. HUNT., p. 353.

¶ *Sax. Chron.*

** ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 375.

In the course of the same year came Æthelfleda, lady of the Mercians, on the holy eve of the invention of the cross,* to Shergate, and there built a fortress. Another was, the same year, built by her at Bridgenorth.†

It was about Martinmas time, in the year 913, that King Edward had built the northern fortress at Hertford between the Memer, Benwic, and the Lea;‡ and afterwards between the Gang days§ and Midsummer, marched with a portion of his army into Essex; there fixed his camp at Maldon for the purpose of covering his men, who built a fortress at Withan. As soon as it was erected, the inhabitants, who previously had been subjected to the power of the Danes, submitted to him, and acknowledged him as their king ||

* This was the third of May. See *Calendar* appended to COOPER'S *Account of the most important Public Records of Great Britain*, vol. ii. p. 489. "The finding of the cross by Saint Helena, happened in the year of our Lord, 326, in the twenty-first year of Constantine's reign, the thirteenth of the pontificate of Sylvester, and the first after the Council of Nice." BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v. p. 564. This great event in the life of a British princess, and in the annals of the Church was duly and solemnly celebrated in this country, until the time of the Reformation.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ "Flumina non profunda sed clarissima." H. HUNT., p. 353.

§ The old Anglo Saxon name for rogation days—the three days immediately preceding the Feast of our Lord's Ascension. For an account of their pious observance formerly in England, see ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 225, § 3, 4. Interesting historical particulars respecting them will be found in BERGIER *Dictionnaire de Theologie*, in verb. "*rogations;*" vol. vii. p. 176. BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v. p. 611. DUCANGE in verb. "*rogationes*," and THORPE (Ancient Laws and Institutes of England) Glossary, in verb. "*Gang-days.*" BRAND'S *Popular Antiquities*, vol. i. pp. 197—212. (BOHN'S *Antiq. Lib.*)

|| *Sax. Chron.* See F. WIGORN, p. 600. The Saxon Chronicle

In the year 916, the innocent abbot Egbert was slain;* and three nights afterwards Æthelfleda sent an army into Wales, by whom the fortress of Brecknock was stormed, the king's wife, and some four and thirty other persons taken, and brought away as captives.†

In the year 917,‡ an armed party of Danes marched in a congregated body out of Northampton and Leicester, broke the truce which the king had conceded to them, and put to death a great number of the English at Hockerton, and the places adjacent to it, as well as in Oxfordshire. They then returned home, and immediately afterwards a second party of them ventured upon an expedition as far as Leighton. The people of the country having discovered who their assailants were, and where they might be found, attacked them, put them to flight, stripped them of all the plunder they had acquired, and deprived them even of their horses.§

---

specifies the different towns built by Æthelfleda. They were Tamworth and Stafford, in 913; Eddesbury and Warwick, in 914; Chirbury, Warburton, and Runkorn, in 915.

* *Sax. Chron.* "Venerabilis abbas Egbrightus, 6 Cal. Julii injuste occiditur." F. WIGORN, ad an. 917, p. 600. Upon this circumstance, it is remarked by Alford: "Sed quis ille, aut quorsum occisus non explicat, nec aliunde adhuc mihi innotuit. Si fuit Danorum victima, aut barbara manu mortuus." *Annal. Eccles. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 227, ad an. 917. We conceive it probable, from the manner in which his death is so closely connected both by the Saxon Chronicle, and Florence of Worcester with the invasion of Wales on the part of Æthelfleda, that Egbert was slain by the Welsh. A different reason for this invasion is however assigned by LAPPENBERG, *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 92. See CARADOC, p. 46.

† F. WIGORN, p. 600.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*

§ H. HUNT., p. 353. The Saxon Chronicle adds "and of their weapons a good deal."

In the year 918,* the Pagan pirates, who for a period of nineteen years had abstained from their attacks on the British coast, again ventured upon the invasion of England.† They came here from the French coast and from the district of it, which is called that of the Lediviccians,‡ under the command of the two jarls, Ohter and Rhoald. The direction taken by their fleet was round the coast of Wessex, and Cornwall, until they reached the mouth of the Severn. They sailed up that river, and instantly afterwards descended upon the lands of the North Britons, and carried fire and devastation all along the side of the river—bearing off with them, or nearly destroying whatever came in their way. In this expedition they captured, at a place called Irchinfield,§ a Welsh bishop named Camlac, whom they instantly carried off in great triumph to their

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. WIGORN, p. 600, ad an. 915.

‡ "The inhabitants of Armorica, now Bretagne; so called, because they abode day and night in their ships; from *lid* a ship, and *Wiccian*, to watch or abide day and night." INGRAM'S *Saxon Chronicle*, p. 131, note 2.

"Nennius (c. xxiii.) gives another explanation, viz., 'Letewiccion (Lhet Vydion, *Camd.*), i.e. *Semitacentes*, quoniam confuse loquuntur. Hi sunt Britones Armorici." I would rather derive it from the old name of Armorica, Lætica, terra Lætuvia (see Daru, i. 25), in favour of which reading 'Liothwicum' speaks, as well as the derivation of the German 'Leute' from the Læti of the Roman province." LAPPENBERG.

"In the Scōp or Scald's Tale, the line 'mid lid-wicingum' would countenance the deriving of the word from *lid*, ship, and *wicing*, viking, pirate. In one MS. also of the Sax. Chron. a. 885, the reading 'lid-wicing' occurs. See *Cod. Exon.*, pp. 323. l. 17, and 519." THORPE note on LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 94.

§ "Irchinfield, in Herefordshire." COXE.

ships. The freedom of this bishop was very soon after purchased by King Edward, for forty pounds in silver.

A short time subsequent to the payment of this ransom, the entire of the Danish army burst forth from their ships, and in the hope of being able to capture still richer prizes, and possess themselves of a larger quantity of plunder, advanced again into the country as far as Irchinfield. They were there surprised by a sudden attack made on them by the men of Hereford, and of Gloucester, and of all the circumjacent towns. A battle ensued, in which the leader of the invaders, Rhoald, and a brother of the second leader, Ohter, along with the greatest party of the army, were killed on the spot, whilst the rest were compelled to take to flight, and at last finally driven back by the Christians into a confined, narrow, although still defensible position—a species of stockade.* The Christians closely invested this place, until the Danes were forced to yield hostages to them, conditioning that they would retire in all speed from the territories over which Edward reigned as a sovereign.†

For the purpose of preventing any further attacks by these piratical bands upon the provinces of his kingdom, Edward distributed his army in various suitable positions

---

* "And bedrifon hie on ænne pearruc." *Sax. Chron.* "A Christianis in quoddam sepum coguntur." F. WIGORN.

† "About the same time a considerable fleet from Tydwike, under the command of Uther and Rahald, sailed by the western sea to Wales, and destroyed St. Davids; where was fought the battle of Dinarth, and Mayloc, the son of Peredur Gam was slain. After this they entered into Herefordshire, where they were fought withal, and Rahald was slain, and the rest compelled to forswear the king's land, and never to return any more to England." CARADOC., p. 45.

all along the southern bank of the Severn, from Cornwall to the mouth of the Avon. Upon two occasions these precautions were taken in vain, for the Danes twice effected a night landing on the coast—once at Watchet, and the second time at Porlock. On both occasions they left their ships to accomplish a stealthy spoliation; but on both occasions the spoilers, with the exception of those who coward-like fled to their ships, were put to death by the king's soldiers. So completely broken were the Danes by the slaughter thus inflicted upon them that they retreated to a certain island, named Reoric,* where they remained for a long time, and until, in fact, many of them perished from absolute hunger. Compelled by necessity they first betook themselves to South Wales, and from thence in the autumn they sailed to Ireland.†

The same year the invincible king Edward marched his army to Buckingham, where he remained for thirty days, until his soldiers had erected strong fortifications on both sides of the river Ouse,‡ in consequence of which one of the leading men amongst the Danes, named Turketill, submitted to his power. An example which all the persons of high rank in Bedford and many of Northumbria felt themselves coerced to follow.§

It was about Lammastime in this year, that Æthelfleda,

* "Bradanrelice." *Sax. Chron.* "Flat-Holms." IRWIN. "The isle of Stepen." CARADOC. "Flatholme, in Bristol Channel." THORPE.

† F. WIGORN, p. 600. "They were forced by hunger to sail to South Wales, intending to make a considerable prey of that country; but failing of their aim, they were constrained to make the best of their way to Ireland." CARADOC, p. 45.

‡ See CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. ii. p. 37.

§ F. WIGORN, p. 600.

the lady of the Mercians, did, with the help of God, enter as a conqueror into the town of Derby. In seeking to gain possession of the place, four thanes, who were much respected by her, were slain within the gates.*

King Edward in the year 919 compelled the burgesses of Bedford, by force of arms, to submit to his power—and to yield again that allegiance which was due to him.†

In the year 920, the town of Maldon was repaired and fortified by king Edward. And the same year went the jarl Turketill over the sea to France, with the men, who would adhere to him, under the protection and assistance of king Edward.‡

---

* *Sax. Chron.* S. DURHAM, *Hist.*, 153. "Castellum acerrime invasit et in ipso portæ introitu prœlii maxima vis exarsit, ubi quatuor duces fortissimi Edelfled cæsi sunt." H. HUNT., p. 353. "Huganus" (the Lord of West Wales) "fled to Derby, and being there kindly received, joined himself with the king's enemies, the Danes. Elfleda being certified of that, followed him with her army; but in storming the gates of the town had four of her best officers killed by Huganus. But Gwyane, Lord of the Isle of Ely, her steward, setting fire to the gates, furiously ran upon the Britons, and entered the town; upon which Huganus, perceiving himself to be over-matched, chose rather to fall by the sword, than cowardly to yield himself to a woman." CARADOC, pp. 46, 47.

† *Sax. Chron.* This year a Welsh king was placed under the ban of excommunication by the synod of Llandaff, on account of the base assassination by him of one of his subjects. See ALFORD. *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. p. 230, § 6.

‡ *Sax. Chron.* Ingram's translation slightly altered. What it may be asked became of Turketill and his companions? Is there not a probability that they are the Northmen referred to in the life of St. Albinus, bishop of Anjou, who some time about the year 919, or 920, landed at Guerande, in Britanny, and were repulsed as the people believed by St. Albinus, whose aid had been invoked by the inhabitants in the extremity of their distress. See Miracles of St. Albinus as quoted in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix. p. 151. *Act. Sanct.* (Mart), vol. i. p. 62. That faith in such a miracle should be maintained at such a period is consistent

In the course of this year* Æthelfleda obtained peaceable possession of the town of Leicester; and nearly the whole of the Danish army who had undertaken to defend it, submitted to her as their sovereign. The Danes too, who held command over York, came to terms with her—some bound themselves by a treaty, and others pledged themselves by their oaths, that they would submit to her will, and yield obedience to her counsel in all things.†

A short time subsequent to these events Æthelfleda died at Tamworth. She expired twelve nights before Midsummer, in the eighth year of her reign, over the Mercians, and her body was interred at Gloucester, in the east porch of St. Peter's church.‡ She left as heiress to her kingdom, Alfwinna, (her daughter by Ethered, the ealdorman of the Mercians;§) who was the same year deprived of all authority and conducted into Wessex.‖

---

with the fact, that it happened at a time, when the richest gift, and the truest pledge of his friendship which a German emperor could receive from a king in France, was a relic of one of the saints:—"eique in signum fœderis et amoris misit manum pretiosi Martyris Dionysii auro gemmisque inclusam." *Ex. Chron. Sithiens.* A.D. 921. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix. p. 77. It may, however, be fairly objected that the Danes under Turketill, who invaded Britanny, could not have done so, "mid Eadweardes frith and fultume." To which we reply these words may merely signify that Edward sanctioned and aided the Danes under Turketill in quitting England—and that once they had passed out of his dominions, he no longer had any controul over them.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. Wigorn, p. 601.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*

§ F. Wigorn.

‖ *Sax. Chron.* Mr. Turner remarks, that "a peculiar spirit of hostility seemed in the latter years of his (Edward's) reign to have excited the Anglo Danes; for scarcely had they experienced the de-

In the year 921,* there were built, in accordance with the commands of king Edward, the towns of Towcester, and of Wigmore—the first previous to the festival of Easter; and the second subsequent to that festival—that is about the time of the Gang-days (Rogation-days)†.

---

feats already noticed, before another aggression was attempted, and was punished. *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 172. Caradoc attributes this hostility to the deposition of Alfwinna by Edward. These are his words as to this transaction:—"After the death of Elfleda, King Edward most unjustly disinherited her daughter Alfwyen; and entering into Mercia, seized all the land into his own hands; upon pretence that she, without his knowledge, (whom her mother had appointed her guardian) had privily promised and contracted marriage with Raynald, *King of the Danes*. But this unjust and unnatural action of King Edward's might possibly bring upon him those vehement troubles which presently ensued upon it." CARADOC, p. 47. If Alfwinna had allied herself with the Danes, the king's enemies, he certainly could not be much censured for depriving her of a power, which was to be employed against himself. Alfwinna must have felt more love for the Danes than regret for her mother's memory, if the dates in the Saxon Chronicle be correct; for it places the death of Æthelfleda as happening twelve nights before Midsummer, and the removal of Alfwinna from Mercia to Wessex three weeks before mid-winter in the same year.

The character of Æthelfleda is much admired by all the monkish historians. The following lines to her praise are the composition of Henry of Huntingdon:—

O Elfleda potens, O terror virgo virorum,
Victrix naturæ, nomine digna viri.
Tu quo splendidior fieres, natura puellam,
Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri.
Te mutare decet: sed solam, nomina sexus,
Tu regina potens, rexque trophæa parans.
Jam nec Cæsarei tantum meruere triumphi,
Cæsare splendidior virgo virago vale.

Hist., lib. v. p. 354

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. WIGORN, p. 600.

Both of these towns, as soon as completed, were occupied by his soldiers.*

A few days after the festival of St. John the Baptist, the Pagans of Northampton and of Leicester, in violation of that peace to which they had themselves been assenting parties, advanced in martial array against the town of Towcester, and attacked it, in the hope of carrying it by assault; but those who were within the walls so valiantly resisted their foes, that having endured without flinching the hostilities that were carried on against them for an entire day, were finally able, when assisted by their neighbours, who came to their relief, not only to repel their enemies, but to compel them to take to flight.† From thenceforth constant nocturnal aggressions were made by the Danes upon the unsuspecting inhabitants of Buckingham—some were captured, many were killed, and a vast number of cattle were stolen by the Danes, especially in that district which lies between Burnham wood and Aylesbury.

About the same period of time the Pagan soldiers of East Anglia and Huntingdon, abandoned a fortress which they had established in the last named place, and constructed one, in what they considered was a more secure position at Temsford, hoping that the lands, of which a superior force had deprived them, might again be recovered by war. In pursuance of this expectation, and in accordance with such a policy, they made a rapid march upon the town of Bedford; but those to whom the guardianship of the place had been entrusted being apprised of their

* Roc. de Wend., vol. i. p. 381.

† F. Wigorn, pp. 600, 601.

approach instantly marched forward to meet them. A battle took place—the enemy was signally defeated; for many were killed, and the remainder put to flight. A few days afterwards, however, the Pagans mustered together again a large army composed of their adherents in East Anglia, in Essex, and in Mercia, and made an attack, which lasted during the entire day, upon the town of Wigmore.* The inhabitants of Wigmore made a valiant defence; and finally repulsed the enemy; but had not sufficient strength to prevent his carrying away an immense quantity of pillage.

The summer season, during which the before mentioned events had taken place, had not yet passed away, until a large number of fighting men were gathered together, from all the adjoining cities, and provinces, that were subject to the sovereignty of king Edward, and marched against the Danish fortification erected at Temsford. They first blockaded, then assaulted, then took, then dilapidated and finally annihilated it with sword and fire; whilst the Pagan king Toglea, and his son, the jarl, Mann, and all who fought for its defence, and their own, were put to death, the others made captive, and the spoil they had gathered together taken away. With this, their defeat, declined the power of the Danes; and with this, their victory, the might of the English, day by day, waxed greater.

In the autumnal season of the same year there was gathered together from Kent, from Surrey, from Essex, and from the cities and districts adjoining the Danish town of Col-

* *Wigingamere* "supposed to be Waymere Castle, on a small island near Bishop's Stortford." THORPE (note on Florence of Worcester, vol. i. p. 126). E.H.S.

chester, no small number of the Christian inhabitants, who marched in a body against Colchester, and invested it until they compelled its surrender. All with the exception of a few, who were able to effect their escape from the town, were killed, and whatever was found in the place was seized as the lawful prize of war.

This circumstance was regarded by the Danish inhabitants of East Anglia as a gross affront, and a grievous wrong to themselves. They therefore determined upon having revenge. They contracted an alliance with the pirates on the coast, and brought them as their allies before the town of Maldon, which was invested by them. The siege was maintained by them until the English of the surrounding districts came to the relief of their countrymen. As soon as the Danes heard that a fresh body of forces were approaching to the support of the men of Maldon, they retreated from before the town; but as they were in the act of doing so, the movement made by them was observed by the English, who on the instant made a furious attack on their lines, slew several thousand of the pirates, and the Danish landsmen, and put the rest to flight.

This victory was speedily followed by an expedition made by king Edward to Passham, where he remained until he had encircled the town of Towcester with a stone wall.

Events like these had served to convince the Danish jarl Thutferth, that he could no longer offer any effectual resistance to the vigour, the powers, and the energy of the king. He therefore, with all the towns and districts of Northampton, including alike their Danish as well as their

English inhabitants, submitted to Edward as their supreme lord.

The king, on his return home, sent out a fresh body of soldiers to Huntingdon, in order that they might repair the damage that had been done to it, restore it to its former strength, and then protect it with a garrison. The result was that all the provinces which had been forced to submit to the cruel domination of the Danes, now rejoiced at having escaped from their hands, and came to seek the king's protection and the king's peace.

A few days after this general submission, the king collected together a West Saxon army, and proceeded to Colchester, where he repaired the walls, and then placed in the town brave warriors to whom regular allowance for their sustentation was assigned.*

Whilst the king was at Colchester, many Englishmen, inhabitants of East Anglia and of Essex, who for nearly thirty years had been subjected to the cruel tyranny of the Danes, gladly and willingly acknowledged Edward as their king. Even the Danes of East Anglia came to him, and bound themselves by oaths, that neither by land, nor by sea, would they thenceforth do aught that could give offence to him. An army of Danes that was at Cambridge also presented itself before him: its soldiers chose him as their king and lord, and in accordance with a wish expressed by the king to that effect, they testified their fealty and obedience to him by an oath.†

---

* "Virosque in ea bellicosos cum stipendio posuit." F. WIGORN. See DUCANGE, in verb. "*stipendium*," vol. vi. p. 375. (Didot's Edition, 1843).

† F. WIGORN, pp. 600, 601. The oath of fealty is very strongly expressed in the *Saxon Chronicle*. "And all the army in East

The town of Gladmouth was also repaired this year by king Edward; and amongst its events is to be mentioned the murder of the jarl Neil, by his brother king Sithric.*

Between the rogation days and Midsummer, king Edward marched with his army to Stamford, and had the town fortified on the south side of the river; and, as soon as this was effected, the persons who held the town on the bank tendered their submission, and acknowledgment of him as their lawful sovereign.†

The kings in North Wales, viz., Howell, Cledauc, and Jothwell, and all the people of North Wales this year submitted to king Edward, and sought him as their lord.‡

Anglia swore union with him; that they would do all that he would, and would protect all that he protected, either by sea or land. And the army that belonged to Cambridge chose him separately for their lord and protector, and confirmed the same with oaths, as he had advised." INGRAM'S *Translation*, p. 137. Upon the distinction between "*Homagium*" and "*Juramentum Fidelitatis*," see BOUQUET, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. xi. p. 338.

* *Sax. Chron.* "Nec multo ante Sedric Rex Nordhumbre occiderat fratem suum Nigellum." H. HUNT. p. 354.

"Eodem anno rex Northanymbrorum Sihtricus occidit Niellum fratrem suum et infregit Devenport." S. DUNELM, *Hist.*, p. 153.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ *Sax. Chron.*, see F. WIGORN, ad 919, p. 602. "Howel was the celebrated Howel Dha, the legislator of Wales. He held both Powys and South Wales. Clydauc was his brother." WYNNES, *Hist.*, pp. 44, 45. Powys and Dinefawr were tributary to the king of Aberfraw. The laws of Howel Dha mention the tribute to the king of London thus: "sixty-three pounds is the tribute from the king of Aberfraw to the king of London, when he took his kingdom from him; and besides this, except dogs hawks and horses, nothing else shall be exacted," lib. iii. c. ii, p. 199. Wotton's edition." TURNER'S *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 173, 174, note 24. For an account of the battles between the Welsh and English, see CARADOC, pp. 46, 47, 48.

This event was succeeded by the king's advance against Nottingham.* He there built on the southern bank of the river Trent a fortified town, as a check upon the town already built upon the northern bank; and he connected both together by a strong bridge.† Having thus secured this borough he ordered it to be manned both by English and Danes.‡ Then all the population of Mercia, the Danes as well as the English willingly became his subjects.§

The king's brother Clito Ethelwerd died this year, and his body was borne to Winchester, where it was interred.‖

In the year 923, the borough of Thelwall was repaired, a population placed, and a garrison stationed in it by king Edward; whilst the town of Manchester was not only repaired, but a garrison placed in it, which was composed of Mercian soldiers.¶

It was in this year that the Danish king Reynold gained

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. Wigorn, p. 602.

‡ "And gesettan ægther ge mid Engliscum mannum ge mid Deniscum." *Sax. Chron.* The policy of Edward in thus garrisoning his towns is expressed in various terms by Florence of Worcester; "viros in ea bellicosos cum stipendio," as already quoted; "in ea custodes," ad an. 918, "ad ejus præsidium quosque fortissimos de exercitu suo reliquit." ad an. 920. "In ea fortes milites collocavit." Ibid. "In illa milites viribus robustos posuit." ad an. 921, "paganos de omnibus urbibus et castellis muralis ejiciens, Chistianos introduxit." Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 28. (Gale).

§ *Sax. Chron.*

‖ F. Wigorn, p. 602 "This was the son whom Asser tells us had been 'sub diligente cura magistrorum traditus.' *De Gest. Ælf.*, p. 43." Coxe. Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 384, note 4. (E. H. S.)

¶ *Sax. Chron.*

possession of York.* Reynold was a Pagan, who had landed with a large fleet on the coast of Northumbria.† From the coast he had marched upon York, at once gained possession of the place, and signalised his triumph by the slaughter, or expatriation of its noblest and best inhabitants. He then took possession of the entire lands of St. Cuthbert, and divided its different vills between two of his followers—one named Scul, and the other Onlafbald. The first of these afflicted the natives with great and grievous tributes. The second Onlafbald, much more cruel, and far more wicked, seemed by his conduct to be determined upon the destruction of all who were subjected to him. The bishop, community, and the people of St. Cuthbert, were constantly molested by him; and the lands which, by right, belonged to the bishopric, were audaciously taken possession of by him. The bishop desiring to win this persecutor to the true faith, thus addressed him:

"I beseech of you to lay aside that cruelty which you "have hitherto so recklessly exercised; and to refrain "from all further undue, and illegal attacks upon the pro- "perty of the church; for be assured if you despise these "admonitions, you will incur the displeasure of the sanc- "tified Confessor whose rights you invade, and whose "authority you outrage."

Onlafbald, inflamed with a diabolical pride, thus answered the bishop: "What force is there in those threats "of the vengeance of a dead man, which you daily utter "in my presence? What availeth to you that ally upon "whom you rely, when opposed to my strength, and my

* *Sax. Chron.*

† S. Dunelm. *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. xvi, p. 23.

"will? I would dispute even the power of my own gods;
"and how much more of yours!—and especially that of a
"dead man, against whom, and against you all who adhere
"to him, I declare henceforth I shall ever be found a re-
"lentless foe."*

Upon hearing these words, the bishop and all the monks prostrated themselves on the earth, and begged of God, and of His holy confessor, that the threats of the proud man might be rendered of no avail.

On the instant the feet of the miserable man, as he was on the point of stepping from the domicile,† in which he spoke these words, were fastened to the earth, so that he stood crossing the threshold, with one foot on the outside, and the other inside, and yet motionless, for each foot was held as tight to the ground as if it had been nailed there. He could neither go out, nor retire, but was compelled to remain a living moveless log! This dire agony was endured until he made open confession of the sanctity of the most blessed Confessor, and had, perforce, to abandon his impious intention even in the very place to which he had given utterance to it.

This was an example which filled the minds of all the Danes with terror; and had the effect of preventing them from invading the lands, or any other property that rightfully belonged to the church.‡

---

* As to the atheism of the Northmen, see OZANAM *Les Germains avant le Christianisme*, p. 43. MALLET'S *Northern Antiquities*, pp. 119, 153, 532. (Blackwell's edition).

† "*Hostium*,"—a misprint, manifestly "*hostitium*"—hospitium domus. See DUCANGE, vol. iii. p. 719. (Didot's Edition, 1843). In "the History of St. Cuthbert," it is stated that this conversation took place in the church, see p. 74.

‡ S. DUNELM. *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 16, pp. 23, 24. See *Hist. S. Cuthbert.*, p. 74.

In the course of this year died the archbishop Plegmund.*

In the year 924,† the king of the Scots and all his

* *Sax Chron.* It is stated of Plegmund, by Florence of Worcester, that he was "venerabilem virum sapientia præditum," p. 589; and "literis insigniter instructus," p. 595; by Henry of Huntingdon, "a Deo et omni populo electus est," p. 351; and we learn from Ethelwerd that he distinguished himself by his devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and brought to Rome the charitable donations of the Catholic English king and people. "Post triennium vero archiepiscopus Plegmund enceniavit in Wintonia urbe arduam turrim, quæ tum noviter fuerat sita in honore genetricis Dei Mariæ. Pontifex præfatus in ejusdem anni scilicet decursu pro populo Romam quin eleemosinam duxit, Eadwardo quoque rege;" p. 848. See GODWIN, *de Præsul. Ang.*, pp. 48, 49.

Plegmund made a successful pilgrimage to Rome; but numbers of his countrymen were slain in attempting to achieve a similar act of piety about the same period of time, as the following extracts will fully prove.

"*Anglorum* Romam proficiscentium *plurimi* inter angustias Alpium lapidibus a Saracenis obruti sunt." FLODOARD. *Chron.*, ad an. 921. "*Multitudo Anglorum* limina Sancti Petri orationis gratia petentium inter Alpes a Sarracenis trucidatur." Ibid., ad an. 923. "Collecta *Transmarinorum*, sed et Gallorum, quæ Romam petebat, revertitur, occisis eorum nonnullis a Sarracenis; nec potuit Alpes transire propter Sarracenos, qui vicum Monasterii S. Mauricii occupaverant." Ibid., ad an. 940. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. viii. pp. 177, 180, 194.

We may add to the honour of this good archbishop, that he had been originally a hermit, and had shewn the truly Christian example of redeeming men from slavery. "Qui in Cestria insula quæ dicitur ab incolis Plegmundesham per annos plures heremiticam vitam duxerat. * * *—" beatum martyrem Blasium cum multa pecunia auri et argenti emit, et secum rediens Cantuariam detulit et in ecclesia Christi collocavit." GERVAS, *Act. Pont. Cantuar.*, pp. 1643, 1644. See *Evident. Ecc. Cant.*, p. 2018.

A miraculous event is thus referred to under this year's date: "Anno Domini DCCCCXXIII. sanguis Domini venit in Angliam sexto idus Novembris, qui fluxit de imagine Christi, cum secundo in imagine sua a Judæis pateretur priora." ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 384. See F. WIGORN, ad an. 923, p. 602. *Chron. Petriburg*, p. 28. (Giles).

† *Sax. Chron.*

nation; Reynold the king of the Danes with all the English and Danish inhabitants of Northumbria; as well as the king of the Strathcluydians, and all his subjects, chose king Edward the Elder as their father and lord, and entered into a firm alliance with him.*

In the year 925,† the invincible king of the English people, Edward the Elder, he who had gloriously ruled as a monarch over all the inhabitants of Britain, comprising the English, the Scotch, the Cumbrians, the Danes, and the Welsh, and who had achieved many great and glorious deeds, died at his royal vill, named Farndon,‡ and bequeathed his kingdoms to his son Athelstan.§ In consigning the sovereignty to Athelstan, he impressed with great earnestness on the mind of his son, that he should ever feel a particular love and veneration for Saint Cuthbert, specifying how great had been the aid which that saint had given to king Alfred, when he was reduced to absolute poverty, and passing the life of an exile—how

---

* F. WIGORN, ad an. 921. *Sax. Chron.* ad an. 924. See S. DUNELM. *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, p. 153. INGULPHUS. *Hist.*, p. 28. (Gale.) *Chron de Mailros*, ad an. 921, p. 147. R. HIGDEN, p. 259. R. HOVEDEN, p. 422. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 384. In defiance of all these authorities a modern historian, declares that, "During the year 924, Edward the elder came into the north of England, and made pretensions which he lived not to support." CHALMERS' *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 386.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ "Farndon in Mercia," *Sax Chron.* "not Farringdon, as some understand it, which was not in Mercia." INGRAM.

§ F. WIGORN, ad an. 924, p. 602.

valuable and how powerful was the assistance of the saint, when Alfred was battling against his many enemies; and how plainly and manifestly the same saint had helped to relieve him (Edward) in all his dangers and difficulties. With this pious admonition to his son, the aged monarch died the happy death of the just.*

The remains of Edward were deposited with the body of his father in the same monastery, which he had endowed, and greatly enriched with large revenues, and where but a few years previously he had buried his brother Ethelwerd.† This place of burial was the new monastery of Winchester. There the obsequies were celebrated with a truly royal pomp; and shortly afterwards the king's son Ethelward, who died at Oxford, was interred in the same monastery.‡

---

* "Eo tempore Eadwardus rex plenus dierum, et confectus bona senectute filium suum Ethelstanum vocavit, eique regnum suum tradidit, et ut Sanctum Cuthbertum diligeret, &c. Qua ammonitione facta feliciter obiit." *Hist. S. Cuthberti*, p. 74. See as to the piety of Edward the elder, ROSSIUS. *Hist. Reg. Ang.* pp. 96, 97, who ascribes to him the merit of having founded the University of Cambridge. See also W. MALMSB. *De Pontif.* lib. v. p. 362. HARPSFIELD, *Hist. Eccles. Ang.* Dec. Sæc. c. i. pp. 182, 183. ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 205, § 11, p. 207, § 16, 17.

† "Quiescit in eodem monasterio quo pater; quod ipse quoque *magnis redditibus ampliaverat*, in quo et ante quadriennium fratrem Adelwardum sepelierat." W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 130. In purchasing ground for the purchase of out-offices for this monastery, it is stated by the same authority, that the king, "ad unumquemque pedem manca auri publico pondere pensitavit." Lib. ii. § 124.

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 602.

King Edward had many daughters;* and hence it happened that one of them, Edgiva, was given in marriage to Charles, the king of the French †—this Charles being the son of Louis, the son of Charles the Bald, whose daughter, as we have before stated, had been married to king Ethelwulf, when returning from Rome to England.

As the opportunity here presents itself of giving a particular account of the several wives and children of king Edward, we hope the friendly reader will not regard the time lost which is bestowed in perusing it.

The first-born son of Edward was Athelstan, whose

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 126.

† "Charles, called Le Simple, posthumous son of Louis Le Bègue, was crowned king of France at Rheims, 27th Jan. 893. He married Eadgiva, or Eadgyfa, daughter of Eadweard the elder, king of England, A.D. 919; and had by her a son, afterwards called Louis IV, king of France, called d'Outremer. In June, 923, he was made prisoner by Herbert, Count of Champagne and Vermandois, and died in prison at Peronne, on 7th October, A.D. 929." Hardy, (notes on William of Mamsbury) vol. i. p. 166. In an account of the transactions of France in former times, references to this princess, the daughter of Edward the elder, will be found in Ordericus Vitalis, lib. v. ad an. 923, lib. vii. ad an. 936. Richard Pictav. *Chron.* ad an. 936 *Chron. S. Petri Senon.* ad an. 937. *Hist. Reg. Franc.* ad an. 911, 936. *Chron. Turon.* ad an. 898, 922. *Chron. Sithiens,* ad an. 898, 923, 936. *Mirac. S. Benedict,* ad an. 936.

The epitaph upon this princess is interesting, but especially to Catholics, who find repeated on the tombstone of the granddaughter of Alfred, his faith in the benefit to be derived by the dead from the prayers of the living :—

"Quæ fueram quondam titulis generosa superbis
Quæ Ducibus regni regimen memorabile Francis;
Hic Ethgiva premor, terræ sub pulvere pulvis,
Quod quisque cernis, casûs reminiscere mortis,
Orans ut requies detur mihi carne solutæ.

Mabillon. Analect, vol. i. p. 427, as quoted in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. ix. p. 103. See also for the authorities previously cited same vol. pp. 12, 17, 23, 34, 43, 44, 49, 50, 77, 140.

mother was named Egwinna, a lady illustrious by her rank,* and who was also the parent of a princess, whose name is now not positively known ;† although she was subsequently married by her brother Athelstan to Sithric, king of the Northumbrians. The second son of Edward by Elfleda, the daughter of the ealdorman Ethelm, was Ethelward—a youth who was a thorough and accurate scholar, and who bore a striking resemblance to his grandsire, Alfred, both in face and in manners. This youth died a very short time after his father. Edward had also by the same wife a son named Edwin, of the manner of whose death we shall hereafter have to state what was the general opinion—a statement that we do not mean to put forward with a perfect confidence in its accuracy; on the contrary, we shall give it with great doubt and hesitation. Edward was also the father, by Elfleda, of six daughters, viz. Edfleda, Edgiva, Ethelhilda, Ethilda, Edgitha, Elfgiva. The first and third of these devoted themselves to God and a life of celi-

---

* "Egwinna illustri fœmina." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. See § 131 and 138, where there is reference to an attempt made to impugn the legitimacy of the birth of Athelstan. That which appears in the text, as well as the passages alluded to, are in contradiction to § 139.

† "Cujus nomen scriptum non in promptu habeo." "The name of Eadward's daughter, who was given by her brother Athelstan in marriage to Sihtric, king of Northumbria (30th January, 925,) does not occur in any of the early English Chronicles. She is called Beatrix by the Scottish historians." Hardy (W. Malmsb. vol. i. p. 197) note 5, (E.H.S.) Roger of Wendover states that her name was Eathgitha, and although married to Sithric, she passed her life as a maiden who had devoted herself to God; and on his death repaired to Pollesworth monastery, where she became a nun, devoting her entire time to prayer, to fasting, and to alms deeds; and that the sanctity of life was notified by many miracles at her shrine, ad an. 925, vol. i. pp. 385, 386.

bacy—Edfleda in the sacred robes of a nun; Ethelhilda, whilst wearing an humble lay habit. They renounced alike the pleasures of this world, and the remains of both were interred near to those of their mother at Winchester. Edgiva, as we have already stated, was bestowed by her father upon king Charles; her brother Athelstan bestowed the hand of Ethelda upon Hugh.* To Henry, the emperor of the Germans, was sent by Athelstan his two sisters, Edgitha† and Elgiva,‡ and the emperor married the one to his son, and the other to a certain great man, whose principality is near to the Alps. The king, by his third wife, Edgiva, became the father of two sons, Edmund and Edred, who both reigned as monarchs on the death of Athelstan. He was by the same wife also the father of two daughters, named Edburga and Edgiva. Edburga was a virgin consecrated to Christ, and whose remains were placed in Winchester; whilst Edgiva, who was a woman of extraordinary beauty, was united in marriage, by her brother Athelstan, to Louis, prince of Aquitaine.§

---

* "Hugh, Count of Paris, surnamed the Great, son of Robert I., king of France, the brother of king Eudes. He died A.D. 956, but left no issue by Eadhild. He was the father of Hugh Capet, king of France." HARDY (W. Malmsb. vol. i. p. 198) note 2.

† "Eadgitha, daughter of Eadwerd the elder, was married, A.D. 930, to Otho, afterwards king, and subsequently emperor of Germany. She died 26th Jan. A.D. 947." HARDY (W. Malmsb. vol. i. p. 168, note 2.

‡ "Aldgitha, or Elfgiva, (called in French history Adela) was married to Eblus or Eble, son of Rainulph, count of Poitou, and duke of Aquitaine." HARDY (W. Malmsb. vol. i. p. 168) note 3.

§ "This seems to have been Louis the blind, king of Arles; and if so she must have been one of the elder daughters, as he appears not to have survived A.D. 930. She had at least one son by him, Charles Constantine, earl of Vienne. *L'Art. de Verif. les*

Edward had his daughters so educated, that in their infantile years they should have their minds devoted to the acquisition of a literary knowledge; and afterwards that they should be always engaged with their distaff and their needle; and that thus being constantly employed with such occupations of skill as these, their minds might be preserved in a perfect state of maiden purity.* As to his sons, he was careful that a rich and full store of scholarship should be possessed by them; so that, when they were called upon to govern the commonwealth, they should undertake the task as philosophers who were well acquainted with the principles on which they were about to act, and not as ignorant boors, to whom the science of politics was a mystery.†

Dates, ii. 429." SHARPE'S Translation of Wm. of Malmsbury, p. 143, note 5. See Hardy's edition of Malmsbury, vol. i. pp. 168, 198, notes 3 and 5.

* "Filias suas ita instituerat ut literis omnes in infantia maxime vacarent, mox etiam, colum et acum exercere consuescerent, ut his artibus pudice impubem virginitatem transigerent." W. MALMSB. The education of the daughters of Edward the elder, and the manner in which their time was employed, resembles that which is stated of the daughters of Charlemagne. See EGINHARD in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. v. p. 97. In former times, the rich vestments and magnificent altar cloths came from the hands of princesses, and ladies of the highest rank. Such works, devoted to such pious purposes, whilst they employed the skill and taxed the ingenuity of those who were engaged in them, aided in elevating their minds to the love and honour of Him, for the beautifying of whose worship they consecrated their time and their thoughts.

† "Filios, ut primum eruditio plena literarum in eos confluueret, et deinde quasi philosophi ad gubernandam rempublicam non jam rudes procederent." W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 126. Such was the education of the children of kings and queens in times that are called "the dark ages," and when the only instructors were monks and nuns!

Of the many daughters, whose names we have mentioned, as being born to Edward by his wife, Edgiva, there was one—Edburga—who was scarcely three years of age, when she exhibited a most wonderful proof of what would be her future sanctity.* King Edward was desirous of learning whether the inclination of his infant daughter was towards the service of God or of the world; and he therefore had deposited on the same couch, those things which might be regarded as the ornaments of professions and pursuits the most opposite to each other: on this side were laid a Chalice, and a copy of the Gospels; and on the other, braclets and necklaces. To the room in which these things were displayed, the little maiden was borne in the arms of her fondling nurse, and then was placed upon the knees of her father, who sat awaiting her arrival. Being desired to choose whichever of the things before her that she preferred, she first looked down with a frowning contempt upon the secular ornaments, and then quickly grasped in her hands the Gospels and the Chalice, and with infantine innocence manifested her adoration of them. All who were present and witnessed this scene, exclaimed, that the demeanour of the child was an auspicious indication of her future sanctity. As to her father, he pressed the baby to his heart, kissed her again and again, and then thus addressed her:—"Go—go—my child, whither the Divinity "calls thee—follow with a firm and fortunate foot the "Spouse whom thou hast chosen; and then truly happy— "most blessed indeed, shall my wife and myself be, should "we find that we are exceeded in our love of religion by "our daughter."

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 217.

Thus it was that Edburga came to assume the habit of a nun, in the city of Winchester, where she courted the affections of every member of her community by the unceasing exercise of diligence and obedience; for her high, her exalted, it might be termed her magnificent, rank and descent never impelled her to think as unworthy of herself any office, or any duty; because she regarded all as glorious that were done in the service of Christ. As she grew in years so did she increase in sanctity—the humility of her youth matured into a greater strength with age, and was so extreme, that she would at night secretly remove the socks of the several nuns, and when she had carefully washed and anointed them, replace them on the beds of her sleeping companions. Now, although God signalised her sanctity even whilst she was living with many miraculous graces, still we specify the fact just mentioned particularly, because we wish to show, that when all her works began with charity, still it was her humility that rendered them perfect.

Many miracles, both while she was living, and after her death, afforded approving testimonials of the devotion of her heart, and the purity of her body; and these were long told *vivâ voce* at the monasteries of Winchester and Pershore, to all who chanced to be unacquainted with them.*

---

* "——quæ templorum ejus æditui Wintoniæ et Perscore nescientibus viva voce pronunciant." W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 217.

"Bishop Ethelwold took up her sacred remains, and put them in a rich shrine, which the abbess Elfleda covered with gold and

It now becomes our duty to state some particulars respecting the laws of king Edward.*

"King Edward commands all the reeves that ye judge such just dooms as ye know to be most righteous, and it in the doom-book stands. Fear not on any account to

---

silver. Algiva, daughter of Count Ethelwold, was abbess of this house" (St. Mary's, Winchester,) "when Egilwald, or Alward-Wada, Earl of Dorsetshire, desired of her a portion of the relics of this holy person for the monastery of Pershore, in Worcestershire, which had been destroyed by the Danes, and he had just re-built. The abbess gave him part of her skull, some of her ribs, and other bones, which were enclosed in a rich case, and were kept at Pershore as its most precious treasure; though the principal part of her body was venerated at St. Mary's in Winchester. See LELAND, *Collect.* t. i. pp. 51, 278, t. ii, p. 264." BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. xii. p. 1059.

The following extract from the work of the Anti-Catholic Lappenberg is well worthy of perusal, as shewing that among the sons of Edward, there was at least one worthy of canonization:—

"Mention is also made of another son of Eadward, and brother of Æthelstan, named Gregorius, whom a yearning after heavenly goods drew from his father's court to the graves of the apostles, and from the city of St. Peter to the wilds of the Alps. At his instance his brother-in-law, the emperor Otto, it is said, converted a chapel there, founded by St. Meinrad into an abbey, that of our lady at Einsiedeln. The old, and it seems the modern writers of English history, have overlooked this anecdote of a connexion between their royal house and that celebrated cloister, the truth of which there appears no valid reason to doubt, and which, even if unfounded, would, as mere old tradition, prove the wide-spread renown of Edward more incontrovertibly than any praise bestowed on him as an endower of monasteries." *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 100. As to the name of "Gregorius" being used by one of the sons of Edward, it is justly remarked by Mr. Thorpe, the translator of Lappenberg, that it "was probably assumed on his entering the church."

* BROMTON. *Chron.*, p. 835. It will be observed by the reader that the extracts made from the laws of Edward, are those which solely affect the humble, the slave class, and matters pertaining to religion—those being the subjects to which the peculiar attention of the reader of this work is directed.

pronounce folk-right; and that every suit have a term when it shall be brought forward, that ye then may pronounce.*

"If any one, through a charge of theft, forfeit his freedom, and deliver himself up, and his kindred forsake him, and he know not who shall make 'bot' for him; let him then be worthy of 'theow' work which thereto belongs, and let the 'wer' abate from his kindred."†

* The laws of king Edward, in THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, p. 68, (folio edition). Mr. Thorpe's translation is adopted in the text.

There is a strong similarity between this preamble to the laws of king Edward, and the following admonition to judges, which we find in the laws of the Visigoths:—

—— "Commonemus ad investigandam quidem rei veritatem in causis omnibus solertes existere, et absque personarum acceptione negotiorum omnium contentiones examinare: circa victas tamen personas, ac præsertim paupertate depressas, severitatem legis aliquantulum temperare. Nam si in totum judicii proprietas attendatur, misericordiæ procul dubio mansuetudo deseritur." *Leg. Wis.* lib. xii. tit. i. § 1. in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. p. 436.

† This condemnation of men to slavery, when unable to make good the damage they had done, and to pay the full amount of the pecuniary penalty affixed to their transgression, is a principle which runs through all the ancient laws. In the "Formulæ Bignonianæ," we find a record of the manner in which an acknowledgment of this forfeiture of freedom was made by a person whose crime had reduced him to the condition of a slave.

——"Sed dum ipsos solidos minime habui unde transsolvere debeam, sic mihi apticavit, ut brachium in collum posui, et per comam capitis mei coram præsentibus hominibus tradere feci, in ea ratione ut interim quod ipsos solidos vestros reddere potuero, et servitium vestrum, et operam qualemcumque vos vel juniores vestri injunxeritis, facere et adimplere debeam, et si exinde negligens vel jactivus apparuero, spondeo me contra vos, ut talem disciplinam supra dorsum meum facere jubeatis, quam super reliquos servos vestros."

Formulæ Bignonianæ in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. p. 545.

"Let no man receive another man's man without his leave whom he before followed, and until he be blameless towards every hand. If any one do so let him make 'bot' my '*oferhyrnes.*'*

"And this is then the first which *they*† ordained: that 'Church-grith' within the walls, and the king's 'hand-grith'‡ stand equally inviolate.§

"And if any one violate Christianity or reverence heathenism, by word, or by work, let him pay as well 'wer,' as 'wite,' or 'lah-slit'‖ according as the deed may be.¶

---

* *Laws of King Edward*, § 10. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, pp. 70, 71. "*Oferhyrnes*, Fr. Sursise, Contempt, disobedience; contempt in the present legal sense of the term; also the penalty annexed to such contempt, the various rates of which were fixed according to the party offended." THORPE. *Glossary.*

† The body of laws, from which the subsequent extracts are made in the text, are entitled "the laws of Edward and Guthrum." The explanation of such a designation for them is given by Mr. Thorpe:—"Guthrum died in the year 891, Edward succeeded his father Ælfred in 901. How, therefore, they could have been joint parties to this treaty can only be explained by supposing Edward, when very young, to have been associated with his father. But perhaps the rubric is erroneous, and some other person should be substituted for Guthrum, so far as Edward is concerned.

"The party to this treaty with Edward was apparently a second Guthrum, who, according to Wallingford (pp. 539, 540,) was living in Edward's time, and probably succeeded Eohric the immediate successor of Guthrum I. See *Sax. Chron.*, ad 905. SIM. DUNELM, ad 906. W. MALMSB., lib. i. c. 6." THORPE.

‡ See as to the distinction between 'Frith' a matter of right, the privilege of all within the pale of the law; and 'Grith' a peral and territorial franchise incident to men of a certain rank, ticular places, such as a monastery, king's palace, &c. THORPE, *Ancient Laws*, p. 71, note *b*.

§ *The Laws of Edward and Guthrum*, § i. THORPE, *Ancient Laws*, p. 71.

‖ As to this Danish pecuniary penalty, see THORPE, p. 72, note *a*.

¶ *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § ii. THORPE, *Ancient Laws*, p. 72.

"And if a man in orders steal or fight, or forswear, or violate his vow, let him make 'bot' for it, according as the deed may be, as well by 'were' as by 'wite,' or by lah-slit;' and above all things, make 'bot' before God as the canon teaches, and find 'borh' thereof, or yield to prison. And if a mass-priest misdirect the people about a festival or a fast, let him pay thirty shillings among the English, and among the Danes three half-marks. If a priest fetch not the chrism at the right term, or refuse baptism to him who has need thereof, let him pay 'wite' among the English, and among the Danes 'lah-slit'; that is twelve 'ores.'*

"If a man in orders foredo himself with capital crime, let him be seized and held to the bishop's doom.†

"And if any man guilty of death desire confession, let it never be denied him.‡

---

* *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 3. THORPE, p. 72.

An alteration of one word is made in the translation of Mr. Thorpe—a paraphrase is employed to supply the place of a strictly legal phrase.

† *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 4. THORPE., p. 72.

‡ *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 5. THORPE, p. 72. These dooms, § 3, 4, and 5, shew that the evils caused by the Danish invasion had affected the clergy, because such stringent regulations were required to compel them to attend to the discipline of the church, and to administer such great sacraments as those of baptism, confession, and extreme unction. Whatever be the state or condition of mankind, we find the church in all its sacraments still the same—its honest, virtuous legislators, maintaining them; its saints and martyrs fortifying themselves with the graces those sacraments impart. It was so in the sixth century, it was so in the tenth, and in the eleventh centuries. See, for instance, these laws, and then the extract as to one saint who died about the year 510, and another in the year 1006.

"—— Vocato ad se uno de fratribus, cui cum libertate peculiari olim etiam perungendi infirmos opus injuxerat, secretissime quoque sibi pelusculum petiit, *ut moris est*, inungi." . *Vit. S. Eugend. Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iii. p. 396, ad an. 510.

"If any one withhold tithes let him pay 'lah-slit' among the Danes, 'wite' among the English. If any one withhold 'Rom-feoh' let him pay lah-slit among the Danes, 'wite' among the English.* If any one give not 'plough-alms,'† let him pay 'lah-slit' among the Danes, 'wite' among the English. If any one deny divine dues, let him

---

"His itaque gestis, cum fatiscentibus toto corde membris, hora jam transitus ejus instaret, beatus Pontifex Fulcranus, recepto ordine extremæ Unctionis, et facta humili confessione coram sacerdotibus præsentibus et reverendissimo Magfredo Rutenensi Episcopo, exitum suum perceptione sacri corporis Domini nostri Jesu Christi munivit."

Act. Sanct. (Feb.), vol. ii. p. 715. *Vit. S. Fulcran.*, c. v. § 31. ad an. 1006. Such is the self-same practice in the nineteenth century; and such it was in the first century of Christianity.

"Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." St. James's *Epist.*, chap. v. ver. 14, 15.

* "Gif hwa Rom-feoh forhealde gylde lah-slit mid Denum-wite mid Englum." This is the contribution to Rome, that which was subsequently known as Peter's pence, and which we here find were not merely sanctioned by Edward, but had previously been doomed by that true son of the Roman Catholic Church—the great king Alfred, "the giver of alms, and hearer of masses, Elemosinæ dator, Missarum auditor (see Higden.) *Polychron*, lib. vi. p. 256. The above words are in the sixth section of that body of laws, which declares in its preamble: "*These* are the dooms which *king Alfred*, and king Guthrum chose." This syndon tha domas the Ælfred cyng and Guthrum cyncg gecuran. See vol. i. pp. 569, 703, 707, of this work.

† "A due of a penny annually collected from every plough used in tillage. 'De qualibet caruca juncta inter Pascham et Pentecostem, unum denarium, qui dicitur Plow-Almes.' *Monast. Ang.*, i. f. 256." Thorpe, p. 73. note *b*.

pay 'lah-slit' among the Danes, 'wite' among the English.*

"If any one engage in Sunday marketing, let him forfeit the chattel and twelve 'ores' among the Danes, and xxx shillings among the English. If a freeman work on a festival day, let him forfeit his freedom or pay 'wite' or 'lah-slit.' Let a 'theowman' suffer in his hide or 'hide gild.' If a lord oblige his 'theow' (slave) to work on a festival day, let him pay 'lah-slit' within the Danish law, and 'wite' among the English.†

"If a freeman break a lawful fast, let him pay 'wite' or 'lah-slit.' If a 'theowman' do so, let him suffer in his hide or 'hide-gild.'

"Ordeals and oaths are forbidden on festival days, and lawful fast-days. * * * If it can be so ordered, no one condemned should ever be executed on the Sunday festival, but be secured and held till the festival be gone by.

"If a limb-maimed man who has been condemned be forsaken, and he after that live three days, after that any one who is willing to take care of sore and soul may help him with the bishop's leave.‡

"If witches, or diviners, perjurers, or '*morth*' workers (poisoners), or foul, defiled, notorious females, violators of the marriage vow, be found any where within the land, let them be driven from the country, and the people cleansed, or let them totally perish within the country unless they desist, and the more deeply make 'bot.'§

---

* *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 6. THORPE, p. 73.

† *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 7. THORPE, p. 73.

‡ *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 8, 9, 10. THORPE, p. 74.

§ *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 11. THORPE, p. 74. We here

"If any one wrong an ecclesiastic or a foreigner, through any means, as to money, or as to life, then shall the king,

---

find classed together persons who in all ages have been identified as guilty of the same crimes. In the sixth century the son of Fredegonde, was said to have been deprived of life, "maleficiis et incantationibus," and this is the account given of the malefactors: "Quæ talia de eo" (Mummolus) "audiens, rapi meritrices ad supplicia jubet, quæ se fatebantur carminibus multos intermisse innocentes. * * * Tunc quidem Regina alias earum flammis tradidit, alias rotis innexuit." AIMON. *De Gest. Franc.*, lib. iii. c. 51. See also GREGOR. *Turonens*, lib. vi. c. 35. *Chronique St. Denis*, lib. iii. c. 18. Amongst the Northmen those called witches were notorious as poisoners, see *Konung Harald Harfager's Saga*, c. 44. SNORRO, vol. i. p. 123. Their mode of concocting one of their 'charms' or 'poisons' is thus described by Torfæus.

"Hæc (Freya) Asianos, vanis usu crebram magiæ speciem, *Seid* dictam, prima docuit, quam Gudmundus Andreas ritum Necromanticum interpretatur, quo cacabus veneficiis refertus foco appendebatur, ossibus humanis, lignorum, ad focum alendum usurpari solitorum, vicem sustinentibus; hinc talis coctura *Seid* pro ipsis maleficiis ex hypothesi posita et usurpata reperitur, ipso teste." TORFÆUS. *Hist. Norveg.*, lib. 3, c. 15, vol. i. p. 141. See lib. 3, c. 17. p. 144, lib. v. c. 26, p. 227.

In the laws of the Visigoths, the mere act of consulting "diviners" was severely punished—a freeman was reduced to slavery, and the slave, after undergoing various tortures, sold as a slave beyond the seas, lib. vi. tit. ii. § 1, see also lib. vi. tit. ii. § 4. The following is the enactment against soothsayers, and other persons of the same description. Its penalties will be found to resemble those stated in the text.

"Malefici et immissores tempestatum, qui quibusdam incantationibus grandinem in vineas messesque mittere perhibentur, et hi qui per invocationem dæmonum mentes hominum conturbant, seu qui nocturna sacrificia dæmonibus celebrant, eosque per invocationes nefarias nequiter invocant; ubicumque a judice vel actore, vel procurarotere loci reperti fuerint vel detecti, ducentenis flagellis publicè verberentur, et decalvati deformiter decem convicinas possessiones circuire cogantur inviti, ut eorum alii corrigantur exemplis. Quos tamen judex, ne ulterius evagantes talia facere permittantur, aut in retrusione faciat esse, ut ibi accepta veste atque substantia ita vivant, ne viventibus nocendi aditum habeant: aut regiæ præsentiæ dirigat, ut quod de illis sibi placitum fuerit, evidenter statuat.

or the eorl there in the land, and the bishop of the people, be unto him in the place of a kinsman, and of a protector, unless he have another; and let 'bot' be strictly made, according as the deed may be, to Christ and to the king, as it is fitting; or let him avenge the deed very deeply who is king among the people."*

Hi autem qui tales consuluisse reperiuntur, in populi conventu ducentenas ictus accipiant flagellorum: ut impuniti non remaneant, quos culpæ similis reatus accusat. *Leg. Wisigoth*, lib. vi. tit. 2. § 3, in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. p. 376. See "De Magia Venefica," and "De Goetia et Necromantia," CORNELIUS AGRIPPA. *De Vanitate Scientiarum*, c. 44, pp. 91—96. (Leyden, 1644.)

* *L. L. Edward and Guthrum*, § 12. These extracts will shew what was the spirit of religion and humanity that animated Edward and Alfred, in their struggles against a barbarous, cruel, and infidel population of invaders.

CHAPTER V.

ATHELSTAN.

ATHELSTAN elected as king.. the election opposed by Elfred. Athelstan's virtues and valour as a sovereign.. his munificent donations to monasteries. The king's particular regard for Malmsbury.. his charter to the monastery. The youth of Athelstan.. made a knight when very young by King Alfred. The sister of Athelstan bestowed in marriage on Sithric King of the Northumbrians. Louis the King of France received and protected by Athelstan. Birth of St. Dunstan.. miracle previous to the birth of St. Dunstan, notifying his sanctity.. educated at Glastonbury by Irish monks. Northumbria annexed to the crown of England by Athelstan. (Single combat between Colibrond [a Danish giant, and Guy, Earl of Warwick.. a legend.) Athelstan's noble conduct to Judwall King of the Welsh and Constantine King of the Scotch. Guthfrith's rebellion.. Athelstan's generous treatment of him. Munificence of Athelstan to the church and the poor. Tribute imposed upon the petty Princes of Wales. Athelstan expels the Cornish-Welsh from Exeter. Harold the Norwegian King sends presents to Athelstan. Marriages of the sisters of Athelstan. Precious relics presented to the King of England by various potentates. An Archbishop of Canterbury travels to Rome.. he promotes

the emancipation of slaves, and supplies the needy with food and clothing. Friendship of Athelstan and the Duke of Normandy. The relics of saints visited by Athelstan. Prayers for the dead.. a miracle. Edwin the Atheling drowned in the year 933. Athelstan submits to a penance of seven years for his cruelty to Edwin. Athelstan marches against the Scotch and the Danes.. visits the shrine of St. Cuthbert.. defeats the king of the Scotch.. Elphegus, Bishop of Winchester, surnamed "the bald".. his piety, learning, and accomplishments.. admonished St. Dunstan to become a monk. Elphegus a prophet. The nephew of Athelstan, Louis, King of France, invited to return to his dominions. Active part taken by the English king, in the transaction between Louis and his subjects. England invaded in 938 by Danes from Ireland. The king prepares to repel the invaders.. visits the shrine of St. John of Beverley. Vision of St. John of Beverley. Miraculous exhibition of personal strength on the part of Athelstan. Last battle of Athelstan. Anlaf the Danish king as a spy in the English camp.. is recognised but not betrayed by a former follower.. his reasons for not betraying Anlaf. Night attack of the Danes on the English encampment.. a bishop slain. In the day of battle a sword miraculously bestowed upon Athelstan. Bravery of the Chancellor Turketel. The great battle of Brunenburgh described by the Saxon poets. Gifts of Athelstan to various monasteries. Death of Athelstan. Laws of Athelstan for the benefit of the church and the poor.

CHAPTER V.

ATHELSTAN.

A.D. 925—941.

In the year 925,* Athelstan was, with the general assent of the nobles, elected as king at Winchester, and crowned at the royal vill called Kingston,† with great magnificence and splendour by Athelm, Archbishop of Canterbury;‡ even though a certain man named Elfred, with a number of his factious adherents—for sedition has ever found approvers—attempted to oppose the election, and prevent the coronation of Athelstan.§

The cause of objection alleged by the opponents of

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† "——*Wintoniæ*——. Itaque magno consensu optimatum *ibidem* Ethelstanus electus, apud regiam villam quæ vocatur Kingestune coronatus est." W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131.

‡ F. Wigorn., ad. an., 924, p. 602. See R. Dicet., *Abb. Chron.*, p. 453. Bromton, p. 837.

§ W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131.

Athelstan, was the illegitimacy of his birth; but beyond this imputation, even supposing it to have any foundation in fact,* there was nothing that could be regarded as base in his entire composition; for he excelled the most devout of his ancestors in piety; and as to martial glory, their greatest victories seemed to be obscured by the splendour of his triumphs. A man is worthy of reverence for virtues that are his own, and not for the valour which might have rendered his ancestors illustrious: these are his; and none other can claim the merit of them: those belong to others, and are apart from his reputation.†

We purposely pass by in this place a description, or an account, of the many new monasteries that were built by him, but still we cannot avoid mentioning that there was scarcely an old monastery in all England; that he did not enrich by additional gifts, by buildings, by books,‡ by church ornaments, or by lands. The new he established and decorated, as if in so doing he was but performing that which was his own, peculiar, and bounden duty; whilst in aiding, and refitting the old, he was merely assisting in carrying out the good intentions and beneficence of others.§

---

* "Si tamen vera est." W. MALMSB., See lib. ii. § 139, where the "saga" respecting Athelstan's birth is narrated.

† "Adeo præstat ex te, quam ex majoribus, habere quo polleas; quia illud tuum, istud reputabitur alienum." W. MALMSB.

‡ "The Cotton. MS. Tiberius, A. ii. is *a copy of the Gospels* presented by king Æthelstan to the church of Canterbury; and Claudius B. v. is a volume also presented by him to the church of Bath." HARDY. (W. Malmsb., vol. i. p. 206, note 1). E.H.S.

§ "Ita recentia ex professo, vetusta quasi aliud agens artifici benignitate insignibat." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131, pp. 205, 206.

This is, we consider, not an inappropriate place to mention the manner in which Elfred (the opponent of Athelstan) came by his death, as we can give the account in the very words of the king himself.* In consequence of Athelstan's having ordered the bodies of his relatives† to be interred at the monastery of Malmsbury, and close to the head-stone of the sepulchre of St. Aldhelm, there was no sacred building for which a greater respect and regard was entertained by him than that of Malmsbury. He bountifully bestowed and confirmed by his charters, many lands on the monasteries; and amongst these is one, in which he annexes these words to the recital of his donation.

"Be it known to all the wise and discreet men of our "kingdom that the above recited lands have not been "unjustly taken from any individual, and then tendered "a sacrilegious spoil to God; but on the contrary, they "have been lands which I had received as being justly "and duly adjudged to me by all the noble and great men "of the kingdom of England, as well as by his holiness "John the Apostolic Pope of the Church of Rome;‡ as "having been possessed by the defunct Elfred, who, whilst "living, had proved himself the foe to my welfare, and "even so far my mortal enemy as to be an assenting "party to the wicked project of my adversaries, who had "determined, upon the death of my father, to have de-"prived me of my sight in the city of Winchester—a vile

* "Hic locus exigere videtur ut interitum Elfredi (de quo superius fidem promissæ narrationis) obstrinxi, regis sermonibus exponam." W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 136, p. 219.

† His cousins Elwin and Ethelwin, killed in battle.

‡ "Insuper et apostolicus papa Romanæ ecclesiæ Johannes." W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 137, p. 220.

"plot to which I should have fallen a victim, had not God, "in His mercy, saved and protected me. But, upon their "machinations being exposed, he was sent to the church "of Rome, in order that he might, in presence of the "Apostolic Pope, defend himself by his own oath. "And such oath did he make before the altar of St. Peter; "but having pronounced the oath, he fell down before the "altar, and was carried from thence in the arms of his "servants to the 'school of the English', and there, three "nights afterwards, expired.* Now, the Apostolic having "remitted to our judgement, and consulted with us what "should be done in regard to this man, and whether his "body should be deposited with those of other Christians; "and on those things being done, and announced unto us, "and on the ealdormen of our kingdom, and numbers of "his relations, having humbly and earnestly prayed of us, "that his body might be interred with the remains of

* This is a fact, which it is presumed modern infidelity will not pretend to doubt. It is stated in an ancient charter, and in that portion of Malmsbury's narrative which he declares to be written from authentic history—"Et hæc quidem fide integra de rege conscripsi," (lib. ii. § 135). This dreadful death of the perjurer, Elfred, resembles in many particulars that which overtook the perjured Emperor Lothair and his courtiers in the year 869. They took a false oath, and made a sacrilegious communion, and within a few days afterwards the emperor died suddenly, and all his courtiers, who had wrongfully sworn and sacrilegiously communicated, died within the course of a year. See *Annales Methenses*, 869. *Marianus Scotus*, 868. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. pp. 196, 242, and Index Chronologicus to the same vol. p. cx. In the life of St. Meinwere, an awful instance is given of the Divine vengeance for perjury committed, when a person had been sworn on the relics of Saints. *Act. Sanct.* (Jun.), vol. i. p. 533, c. 9, § 63. See also *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 692. *Vit.* S. Austregisil, lib. i. c. 1. § 6. Baronius, vol. xv. p. 617, § 9, ad an. 924.

"Christians; and we having yielded to that prayer, and "remitted our assent to Rome, the pope was pleased to "grant to him that Christian burial of which he was "unworthy; and in consequence thereof was adjudged to "me the whole of his possessions, both great and small. "Hence do we notify these facts in writing, in order that "as long as Christ reigns they may not be abrogated. "Therefore is it that the property which was given to me "I give to God and St. Peter; for I know not that any "thing can be more just than that I should offer such "property to God and St. Peter, who caused the downfal "of my enemy in the presence of mankind, and who have "bestowed prosperity upon my reign."*

The wisdom and piety of the king in all matters pertaining to God, are alike indicated in the preceding words—his wisdom is especially deserving of commendation, because although a young man, he showed by such expressions how thoroughly he was convinced that no offering, which was the result of rapine, could be grateful in the sight of God; whilst his piety was proved by the fact, that the gift made to him, in atonement of the Divine vengeance, was peculiarly suited to be offered by him as a testimony of his gratitude to God.†

---

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 137. See *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 31. The reader will observe that in the wording of this charter marked distinction is made between the acts of Athelstan as a sovereign, and as an individual.

† W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 136, 137, 138, vol. i. pp. 219, 220, 221.

It was in accordance with the order and in compliance with the will of his father, that Athelstan was raised by acclamation to the throne, when he was in his thirtieth year, and that the full vigour of his age was in accordance with the soundness and maturity of his judgment.* Even the prayer of his grandfather Alfred, had been offered up, that he might have a prosperous reign, when that king remarked how charming was the face, how graceful the person, and how accomplished were the manners of his grand-son. So loved was the youth by the king, that the latter made him at an unusually early age a knight,† and presented him with a scarlet cloak, a jewelled belt, a Saxon sword, and a golden scabbard.‡ Alfred subsequently confided Athelstan to the care of his daughter Æthelfleda, and his son-in-law Ethered, in order that he might be educated in their court; and there Athelstan so conducted himself as to gain the entire love and affection of his aunt, the confidence of that distinguished general, and at the same time to win in favour of his future dominion the good opinion of mankind; so that the wide spread glory of his valour and his virtues crushed down and annihilated all the struggles of envy, and secured to him,

---

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib ii. § 133, vol. i. p. 210.

† See TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. iii, pp. 124, 125. PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. ii. pp. ccccix. ccccx. See also vol. i, p. 35, chap. 17, pp. 576, 596, vol. ii. p. cccxc. &c. DUCANGE, in verb. *miles*. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 326.

‡ Upon the importance attached to the possession of "a sword ornamented with gold," and an "overgilded sword," see THORPE'S *Ancient Laws*, p. 80, § 10, 'Wergilds.'

after the death of his father, and the demise of his brother, his own immediate coronation at Kingston.*

As soon as his consecration as king had been celebrated, Athelstan determined so to act as that the people should feel he never could falsify the hopes that had been entertained of him, and that his achievements should correspond with their expectations.† This determination was doomed to meet with no disappointment, for the mere terror of his name was sufficient to secure to him the submission of all England with the sole exception of the Northumbrias.‡ The person who presided over these districts was named Sithric—a barbarian by birth, and in disposition—a relation of that king Guthrum, of whom mention is made in account of the transactions in the reign of Alfred—and who though he had presumed to deride and defy the power of Athelstan's royal predecessors, voluntarily sought, through the medium of ambassadors, the alliance of the young king. The messengers of Sithric were speedily followed by himself; for he came in person to declare that his wishes corresponded with their words.§ It was on 30th January, in the year 925, that king Athelstan, and Sithric, king of the Northumbrians, came together at Tamworth;‖ and then the glorious and valiant Athelstan bestowed in marriage his sister upon Sithric—a marriage that was celebrated with fitting pomp and magnificence;¶

* W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 133, vol. i. p. 210.

† Ibid. § 134, vol. i. p. 211.

‡ See Palgrave's *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 296.

§ W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 134.

‖ *Sax. Chron.*

¶ F. Wigorn, ad an. 925, p. 602.

and by which the Dane, endowed with great wealth, laid the foundation for a lasting alliance between the two crowns.*

In the same year, 925, in which Athelstan began his reign, there arrived at his court as refugees, Louis (king of France) and his mother Edgiva.† Both had been induced to fly because of their fear of the French; for a dissension had arisen between Charles, the father of Louis, and the people of France; in the course of which the king fell into their hands, and was put to death by them. The son, apprehensive that his fate would be similar to that of his father, fled to his uncle Athelstan; by whom he was received with all those honours that were due to his rank, whilst no fitting means were left untried by the English king to re-establish peace in France. In pursuance of this object, he sent ambassadors to William, the son of Rollo, duke of the Normans, and by his interposition finally secured that tranquillity which he desired."‡

---

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 134, vol. i. p. 212. For some curious particulars respecting the marriage see WALLINGFORD, p. 540.

† WALLINGFORD, *Chron.* p. 539.

‡ Ibid., pp. 539, 540. See R. DE DICET. *Abb. Chron.* p. 454, ad. an. 927. See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. ix. pp. 23, 50, 77, 140. In the last-cited authority—Mirac. S. Benedict—a strong similarity will be discovered in its language and that employed by Wallingford. In the synod at Engelheim, King Louis complained of the danger to which his life was exposed when his father was a captive, "me vero parvum, in fasciculo farraginis a meis dissimulatum." RICHER. *Hist.* lib. ii. c. 73.

This year (925) St. Dunstan was born.* It was in the first year of the reign of the magnificent king of the English, Athelstan, and when that sovereign had seen all his foes make submission to him, and when peace and concord prevailed over all the land, that Dunstan, a child beloved of God, was born to parents, who, in all that regards the dignity of this world, might he designated great; but who were greater than any temporal rank can express, because of their piety, which made them deserving of being styled worthy and practically religious Christians.† So perfect and so regular was their rule of life—so wholly were their thoughts devoted to virtue, and so unceasing were their works of piety, that even whilst passing through life, common to them as to all other mortals, their merits associated them with the spirits of angels, as was subsequently manifested by a divine revelation to their son. Nor can it be deemed as inconsistent with the ways of Divine Providence, that they who thus lived so virtuously and so well, should be entrusted with the care of a child who was to be an example to others of what is a pure, good, and virtuous life. He, whose greatness was foreseen by God, was blessed by anticipation, by Him, Whose Son received a human form for the purpose of restoring their heavenly rights to all the children of Adam, on whose birth had been placed the ban of malediction. Dunstan's greatness was foreseen by God, whose gifts and graces were so abundantly bestowed upon him, as to permit signs and miracles to notify his excellence to the world, even before the world had seen him, or his mother had given

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† Osbern, Vit. S. Dunstan, *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 359. See *Brit. Sanct.* vol. i. p. 293. Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v. p. 647. Alford, vol. iii. p. 242, § 2.

him birth. * * * * Dunstan was as yet unborn when the festival consecrated to the Purification of the Holy and ever-blessed Virgin Mary occurred.* Upon that day all the population of the neighbourhood had repaired to the church dedicated to the Virgin in Glastonbury, in order that they might on so solemn a day offer up their due devotions to Christ, the King of Kings. Amongst those present on the occasion were Herstan, the father of Dunstan, and his mother Kinedrida. All the lights in the church were burning: the solemn sacrifice of the Mass was proceeded with, the clergy had already gone through the greater portion of the service of the day, and they had come to that part of it in which their voices were heard singing of the infant Jesus being brought into the temple by his parents, when suddenly the majesty of God appeared in the church, and all the lights in all parts of it, as well as in the hands of each person present, were extinguished! A thick and misty darkness filled the entire place. The cold chill of fear made all tremble, their hairs stood erect on their heads, their knees knocked together. All stood panic-stricken, and their silent stillness indicated their stupour and their terror. In order, however, that it might be made perfectly clear what was intended to be signified by this divine visitation, a light from heaven illuminated the church, and resting upon the taper which was in the hand of her, then manifestly in an advanced state of maternity, made it again flash forth with the sparks of a revived fire!† Those who had before wondered because

* The feast of the Purification of the blessed Virgin, and known in England under the ancient designation of "Candlemas-day." See BRAND'S *Popular Antiquities*, vol. i. pp. 43, 51, (Bohn's Antiq. Lib.)

† "Præsagium ergo orituræ lucis fuit, fœminæ cereus mirabiliter accensus, Dunstanum innuens qui regularem disciplinam in Occi-

the lights had been extinguished, were now filled with greater wonder and the highest exultation, when they saw the light thus restored to them. They exulted, because they saw that the grace of God had been visibly present amongst them; but they wondered to find that it had been granted to them through the means of this woman—that its light was thus tendered to them all. "We have" (it could be said by them) "a new John, from a new Elizabeth; we have the Jeremias of our time; for one of these was declared by God, and the other by an archangel, to be sanctified even whilst unborn." And here, in order that the greatness of the grace may be the more readily recognised by us, we may observe that it was on the anniversary of the day on which the Son of God was presented in the temple by his Virgin mother, that this boy, yet unborn, was brought by his mother to the temple of God.

* * * * At the proper time and season his mother gave birth to Dunstan—a child diminutive in his form; but, if regarded according to the immensity of graces thereafter bestowed upon him by God, a very giant in his infancy. Even at his birth he was made to enjoy the honour of his second generation; for the future solidity of his faith was prefigured in the name bestowed upon him in baptism—Dunstan—that which signifies the downright strength and endurance of a stone, and which was bestowed upon him at the desire of his parents. As soon as the tender years of infancy were succeeded by boyhood, and that his tongue was capable of giving utterance to distinct words, he was carried to the same church, which had

dente occidentem; conatu, exemploque suo, pristinæ luci restitueret: quod ille in omni vita sua egregie præstitit." ALFORD, *Annal. Eccl. Ang.* lib. iii. p. 242, § 3; see p. 243, § 6.

been rendered remarkable by the miracle previous to his birth. He was there presented, with other offerings—himself too a victim, living, pure, holy, and pleasing in the sight of God.* His parents passed the entire night in the church, engaged in prayer; and whilst they were thus employed, there appeared before them a man, whose aspect was celestial; and who told them, that at no great distance of time, there would be raised an edifice in that place, that the boy should be left there, and that his sanctity would be renowned for ages. The man then casting a measuring line along the surface of the ground, said:—"Thus shall the place be built, where shall be prepared "for the service of the Lord, those who will, through that "boy, believe in God."† Greatly rejoiced were the parents

---

* The form in which an infant child was offered by its parents to be devoted to a religious life, was this: "Hunc filium nostrum nomine ill., cum oblatione in manu atque petitione altaris palla manu mea involuta ad nomina Sanctorum, &c." See *Formul. Baluzian*, § 31, in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. iv. p. 588. According to the Rule of St. Benedict, cap. 59, the hand of the infant ought to be rolled up in the altar-cloth. Baluzius mentions, in the Homily of an unknown author, on the 8th Sunday after Pentecost, in a very ancient MS. of the church of Leyden, that it is stated: "Sunt multi in sancta ecclesia, qui ab ipsis infantiæ suæ cunabilis mancipantur Dei servitio, et omni tempore vitæ suæ immaculate, Deo servire student, sive in Monasterio ordine, sive in Canonico." This pious practice was abused by some persons, who sent lame, deaf, blind, and even leprous children, into the monasteries, to be reared as monks. Udalricus in Antiquioribus consuetudinibus Monasterii Clumacensis ad Willelmum Abbatem. This complaint is said to be imitated from that of St. Jerome to Demetriade, De Virginitate Servanda. BOUQUET, *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. iv. p. 587, note (*b*).

† From the life of St. Dunstan, by a contemporary, we learn that he at the same time was blessed with a vision—"that he saw an old man dressed in snow-white garments, who conducted him through the beauteous aisles of a holy church, and pointed to

of Dunstan to hear this revelation, and willingly therefore did they commend and leave the boy to the care of the church. * * * *

At that time Glastonbury, although supported by royal donations, was almost absolutely ignorant of the rules of monastic life. The living in community was not then practised in England; the custom of yielding obedience—of sacrificing one's own will to the will of others—was not adhered to. The name of Abbot was one which was scarcely heard; a monastery of monks that which was seldom seen. When a religious felt disposed to pass his days in pilgrimage, he could do so—now, perchance, as a solitary—now, mayhap, associated with a few who coincided with him in intention; and thus could each, as he pleased, pass from his own district to another; and wherever the fitting opportunity of passing his life presented, there he could remain, and thus his days pass away among foreigners.* Such was the custom with many of the monks, but it is one which long prevailed, and still exists amongst the Irish.† That practice, which amongst them first originated in pure benevolence, has now hardened into a habit, and that which was once a habit has now been implanted in them, as a second nature. Many are the illustrious men amongst those Irish monks, nobly in-

---

monastic buildings, such as were afterwards erected by him, when discharging the pastoral duties of a bishop." BRITHFRYTH, *Vit. S. Dunst.* c. i. § 3. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 347.

* Such was one of the evil results of the Danish invasion. With respect to the decay of Monachism, see *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 361, notes. LINGARD'S *Anglo-Saxon Antiquities*, vol. i. pp. 234, 235, 236, vol. ii. pp. 238, 286, 292, 293, 296, 297.

† "*Adhuc* manet apud Hibernos." This is the language used by the monk Osbern, writing in the eleventh century.

structed both in divine and secular literature, who left Ireland, and who, coming as pilgrims into the land of the English, chose Glastonbury as their place of habitation; first, because it was removed from the bustle of civil affairs, next, because it was suited for the use of men like themselves; and lastly, they felt a particular regard for it, because glorified in their eyes by their veneration for the pilgrim Patrick, who had formerly come to this country to preach the gospel, who shone by the performance of many miracles, and was reported to have here slept in the Lord.* When therefore such men, for such reasons as we have stated, came to Glastonbury, and could not find there that which was sufficient to sustain existence, they received the sons of thanes, for the purpose of teaching them every liberal science, so that the deficiency of means in the place of their abode, might be supplied by the generosity of those to whom they imparted knowledge. The most noble amongst those sons of nobles was the pious boy Dunstan—one amongst many—one superior to all the rest.†

---

* Upon the mistake as to the younger St. Patrick being the apostle for Ireland, see BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. iii. p. 356, vol. v. p. 647. *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 92, note (†).

† OSBERN, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. i. § 2, 3, 4. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 359, 360. See also *Hist. Ramesiens*, c. 7, p. 389. R. HIGDEN, p. 261. S. DUNELM, *Hist. Eccles.* lib. ii. c. 17, p. 25. BROMTON, pp. 837, 878. GERVAS, *Act. Pont. Cantuar*, p. 1645. *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. pp. 90, 91, 92.

Upon the difficulty that arises in reconciling the date of St. Dunstan's birth with his early history, see LINGARD'S *Anglo-Saxon Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 269, note 2. ALFORD, vol. iii. pp. 242, 243.

In the year 926,* fiery lights illuminated the northern parts of the skies; and a short time afterwards died Sithric king of the Northumbrians. The province over which he ruled was added by Athelstan to his kingdom upon the expulsion of Guthfrith the son of Sithric, who succeeded to the crown left vacant by the death of his father.†

It was in the year of our Lord 926, and on the 29th of July that there was fought at Winchester, a most desperate single combat.‡ Then had landed in England Olaf, king of

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. WIGORN, p. 602. Rog. de Wendover states that the manner of Sithric's death was "most vile"—turpissimam mortem: an expression previously explained by him, in declaring that Sithric, had subsequent to his marriage, relapsed into idolatry, and abandoned Catholicity:—"idolorum culturam restauravit, et post modicum temporis apostatus vitam miserabiliter terminavit." See vol. i. pp. 385, 386. It is probable that the apostacy of the father, and the obdurate impiety of the son, may have induced Athelstan to deprive the latter of the kingdom of Northumbria.

‡ "Anno domini 926, apud Wintoniam IIII. Idus Julii commissum erat fortissimum duellum." ROSSIUS, *Hisl. Reg. Ang.*, p. 97. The episode that is here introduced from the chronicle of Henry Knyghton, canon of Leicester, is certainly apocryphal. By Knyghton the date of the occurrence is fixed at five years after the celebration of the marriage of Athelstan's sister, Hilda, to Hugh count of Paris. Peter Langtoft mentions it as occurring at the invasion of Athelstan's dominions, by the Hibernico-Danish king, Anlaf, in the year 938. It is probable that a single combat did take place between an English and Danish warrior, in which the former was victorious, and that this circumstance dilated upon by bards, at length found its way into the Scriptorium of the monks, where it was set down, and recorded as history. We give it a place in these pages, not as such, but as an incident which is told so well in the original that it merits translation, and will, perhaps, be perused with pleasure, as that which was *once believed to*

Denmark, Golan, king of Norway, eight jarls, the duke of Neustria, five hundred thousand armed soldiers, and along with them an African giant named Colibrond who was deemed to be the bravest man, and the most accomplished warrior of the age.*

As soon as king Athelstan heard that these foes were advancing against him, he assembled together the great men of the land at Winchester, in order that he might consult with them how he could best resist, and how most fittingly encounter, his enemies in the field of battle. The king was engaged in the witan with his people, and he was listening to the advice which his counsellors gave him, when the two above mentioned kings with their army arrived before Winchester, and instantly besieged it, and thus confined within its walls Athelstan and all the thanes of his kingdom.

At the time that this occurred, Guy Warewick, who had espoused Felicia the daughter of the earl of Warwick, was far away from England on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

For two entire years were king Athelstan and his men besieged; and during all that time they did not venture upon a battle with the Danes, because of the overpowering numbers of the infidels. There had, however, been

---

be history. See on this point, ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 248, § 8. HARPSFIELD. *Sæc. Dec.*, c. ii, pp. 208, 209. The authorities for the statements to be found in the text are thus cited by Rouse: "——ut testantur in Chronicis suis *Henricus Knyghton, Thomas Rodburn, Girardus Cambrensis, Johannes Strench, Johannes Hardyng, Johannes Gresley, Johannes Poutrel,* et multi alii." ROSSIUS, p. 98.]

* HENR. DE KNYGHTON, *de Event. Ang.*, lib. i. c. 5, p. 2321.

meanwhile a compact entered into between the two parties, which was to this effect, that for the purpose of saving both armies—Christians as well as Pagans—Athelstan should provide himself with a champion willing to combat with Colibrond: that the condition on which those two were to fight should be this:—that if the giant of Athelstan should be overcome in the conflict by Colibrond, that then the crown of England should be held in perpetuity as tributary to the king of the Danes; but, if on the other hand, Colibrond should be vanquished by the giant of Athelstan, that Olaf should be regarded as having forfeited both for himself and his heirs, then and for evermore, any claim upon any part of England, and should never again molest, nor harrass its people.

These were the conditions on which a truce was agreed upon for an entire year; during which time, Athelstan, unprovided with a fitting champion, was allowed to seek for one, who would venture upon a single combat with Colibrond—but such was the monstrous stature of that person, so large, so powerful, and so brave was he, that none could be found, who for houses, lands, silver or gold, would peril life in conflict with him. For this reason, the king was sorely grieved, and all his thanes likewise.

The period fixed for the duration of the truce was fast approaching to a close. Not more than fifteen days were wanting to its termination, when king Athelstan, sleeping in his bed at Winchester, was mercifully visited with a vision from heaven; for God had taken pity upon him, and upon England, and the sore straight to which both were at the moment reduced. The words of the divine messenger were as follows:—

"Athelstan, Athelstan, awake! why sleepest thou?"

The king starting up from his slumbers, exclaimed:—"Hail! who art thou?"

"I am," was the reply, "a messenger from heaven, and "sent to thee, and commanding thee, that at the earliest "dawn thou arise, take with thee two bishops, proceed to "the gate, and there wait until the prime hour of day, "when thou shalt see many poor persons, and some pil-"grims enter the city. As soon as thou shalt observe a "man of large stature, clothed in the habit of a pilgrim, "walking barefooted, and his head naked, and on his head "a garland of white roses, detain thou that man—beseech "of him, that for the love of Jesus Christ, and through "that same fervent religious zeal, that made him a pilgrim, "and that for his good will, and desire to promote the "welfare of all England, that he take this battle upon him; "for that to him will be given a victory over the Saracen "Colibrond and to thee, and to thy kingdom will be granted "the joy of triumph, and the security of freedom."

Athelstan arose from his couch at a very early hour; and then, having with extreme devotion attended the solemn sacrifice of the Mass, he summoned to his presence the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of Chichester, to whom he narrated the angelic vision of the preceding night. With these he proceeded to the gate indicated in his sleep,* and there they, whilst waiting till the prime hour of the day, saw entering into the city many persons, rich as well as poor. After a short delay they remarked

---

* "That he suld fynd a palmere orly at morn
"At the south gate, alone as he was born."
PETER LANGTOFT, *Chron.*, p. 32.

approaching towards them a man of noble aspect, who seemed to be proceeding upon his journey with all possible speed. This man was covered with the white coarse habit of a pilgrim,* on his head was a garland of white roses, and in his hand an immensely large staff. He looked however like one who had been broken down with toil, wasted with grief, and afflicted by the bodily anguish consequent upon travelling barefooted, whilst an appearance of age was impressed upon him, by the very long beard that disfigured his features.

As soon as the king looked on this man, he immediately recognised him, as the person who had been notified in his dream, and consequently the joy of the monarch could not adequately find expression in words; but he said to his companions—"Be of good cheer; for this, assuredly, is "the very pilgrim, by whose hand the accursed Colibrond "is doomed to die."

Whilst the king was speaking, the palmer approached, and seeing the king and the bishops, he removed the garland from his head, reverently saluted them, and then was about to speed, as quickly as his sore naked feet would suffer him so to do, into the city, when the king greeted him, laid bold of his habit, and thus addressed him:

"Sir, pilgrim, may I entreat you, for God's sake, "to stop, and listen to a few words. First, we wish you "to remain and accept hospitality from us, in order that we "may hear from you, that which may be to us intelligence "equally strange and new."

---

* "De una *sclauma* alba vestitum." KNYGHTON, p. 2322. See DUCANGE in verb. '*sclavina*'

"Sir, I thank you," answered the palmer; "but the "hour for receiving the hospitality of strangers has not "yet come. My first duty is to visit the churches of this "city, in order that I may offer up my prayers in them; "my next will be to go and seek some subsistence from "whomsoever will be willing to give it to me: afterwards "I mean to depart from the city, in order that I may go "to that place in which I mean to do penance for my "sins."

"Sir, pilgrim," replied Athelstan, "do you know why "and wherefore I have tarried so long here in the expecta- "tion of seeing you? It is the will of our God that "you should strike down in battle the accursed Saracenic "African Colibrond, and thus secure the salvation of the "entire English nation, as well as establish its liberation "from the tribute which a foreign foe would impose upon "it; for you must needs know that Olaf, the king of Den- "mark, and Golan, the king of Norway, have now beset "this city with their army for the space well nigh of an "entire year; and that moreover a truce has been agreed "upon between them and us, of which the main condition "is, that we should find a giant, who should enter into "single combat with their champion Colibrond, the Afri- "can; and, if it should come to pass that our giant should "overcome their giant, then they will, with all speed, for- "sake our land, retire to their own, and never more do us "wrong, nor contrive against us harm, but ever leave the "kingdom of England, free, quiet, and undisturbed from "any claim on behalf of the Danes, or, from any pre- "tension on the part of the present king and his heirs "to render us subject to their yoke. Therefore, do we "beseech you, by your love for Jesus Christ, that you

"will regard that struggle in which you are now asked to "engage, as a work of redemption for all your past sins; "that you will consider the cause which you are asked to "champion, as that of God, and of the christian church; "and that as you are their defender against an impious "Pagan African, you will prove that you are possessed of "a dauntless heart."

"My lord and king," answered the palmer, "you cannot "look upon me, such as I am, toil-worn, weak, broken "down, and exhausted, as one fitted for such a combat as "you propose. Where, may I ask my lord and king, are "those stout knights, whose valour won your esteem, and "in whom you would willingly have confided, when a battle "such as you now mention, was to be fought."

"Alas!" sighed forth the king; "some of those you "refer to are dead, others have gone to the Holy Land, "and have not yet returned. I had, however, one knight, "the Earl of Warwick, by name Guy, and this Guy had "attached to him a knight, named Herand of Ardenne. "Would to Heaven! these were now here before me, soon "would this single combat be fought, and the war with "all its dangers at an end."

No sooner had the king mentioned the names of Guy, and of his companion Herand, than tears burst from the monarch's eyes, and he wept abundantly.

When the palmer saw the king thus weeping grievously, he felt a deep sorrow: compassion for his sovereign overcame him; and he thus addressed Athelstan:—

"For God's sake, my lord and king, I beseech of you "to weep no more, for it is not beseeming that tears "should be in the eyes of a monarch such as you. I will, "with God as my helper, and for the love of Jesus Christ,

"and of His Holy Mother Mary, and in honour of God's "holy church, and for the souls' sake of Guy, and of his "companion Herand, undertake this awful and tremendous "matter now proposed to me."

He was then conducted by the king and the bishops to the church—the bells were rung—and the voices of singers were heard toning forth a joyous and triumphal "*Te Deum laudamus.*"* His body was strengthened with good food,

* The single combat referred to in this episode as taking place between Guy earl of Warwick, and the Danish champion Colibrond, and approved of by the monkish writers, who describe it, was in its nature and object similar to that in which David engaged with Goliah—a combat in defence of the liberties of a people, of the independence of a nation, and for the safety of religion. It was therefore a combat, in which the true believer was fully justified in perilling both life and limb. Other duels are not sanctioned by the church, however prevalent the passions or the vices of mankind may have made them. Thus we find Agobard, bishop of Lyons, in a letter addressed to Louis le Debonnaire denouncing private duels as contrary to the law of God; and in the same letter, par. 2, (No. 4), the remark is made as applicable to this subject, upon the great diversity to be found in human laws as contrasted with the unity of faith and practice in the church. See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vi. pp. 356, 357. In a letter addressed by Pope Nicholas to Charles the Bald, in the year 867, we find duelling condemned in these emphatic words:—

"Monomachiam vero in legem assumi, nusquam præceptum fuisse reperimus: quam licet quosdam iniisse legerimus, sicut sanctum David et Goliam sacra prodit historia; nunquam tamen ut pro lege teneatur alicubi divina sanat auctoritas, cum hoc et hujusmodi sectantes, Deum solummodo tentare videantur." *Concil.* vol. viii. p. 431, as quoted in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. p. 422.

In the year 501, Gondebard, king of the Burgundians, legalised monomachy for the purpose of deciding doubtful, obscure, and difficult disputes. See *Lex Burgundionum*, tit. xlv., and in reference to this tit. lxxx. de testibus. *Rer. Gall, et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. pp. 267, 268, 276, 277. An historian of the seventh century (Fredegarius,) describes a single combat between two knights, the result of which was, that Queen Gondeberge, unjustly

and wine, refreshed with baths, clothed with soft habits, and for three entire weeks he was invigorated with various kinds of recreation.

Upon the day appointed for the combat, the palmer rose from his couch at a very early hour, and heard three

---

accused and imprisoned, was restored to fame and honour in the year 623, see *Grandes Chroniques de Franc.*, lib. v. c. 5, vol. i. pp. 330, 331. In Aimion we find the form of challenge to a duel given: "Quia formido te nunc prohibet mecum manu conserre, proximum est ut domini nostri, pro tuis ausis temerariis, quibus præsumpsiste præripere partem regni domini mei Regis, inter se decernant cum armatorum cuneis. Tunc, si placebit, ego et tu vermiculatis adoperti vestibus, inter conferta congrediamur agmina: ibi et meæ probare ignaviæ, et virtutis tuæ poteris documenta persentiscere." AIMOIN., lib. iii. c. 90. See FREDEGARIUS, c. 25. Ermold the Black gives a long and most interesting description of a duel on horseback, between two Goths, in the presence of Louis le Debonnaire, and when it is stated, a coffin was carried after the champions. Louis endeavoured to prevent the duel, and then to save the life of one of the combatants. See ERMOLD, lib. iii. v. 542, 618. A fatal duel is described as taking place in the year 867, between the princes of Aquitaine. *Rer. Gall et Franc. Script.*, vol. vii. pp. 55, 223, 274. Duelling is said to have been a common practice in England; but then it must have been amongst the Danes settled in this country, see TORFÆUS, lib. 8, c. 27, vol. ii. pp. 340, 341. It was certainly encouraged by the Northmen, as the property of the slain belonged to the conqueror. Ibid., lib. 5, c. 2, vol. ii. p. 201. See BLACKWELL'S *Edition of Mallet's Northern Antiquities*, pp. 132, 325, 328, 335. Witichind in his Annals mentions that the then much litigated point, as to whether grandchildren whose father had died before their grandfather, could claim inheritance along with their uncles, was decided in favour of the grandchildren by a duel, a mode of arbitration which it seems was preferred to any other. "Rex autem meliori consilio usus, noluit viros nobiles ac senes populi inhoneste tractari, sed magis rem inter gladiatores discerni jussit." WITICHIND. *Ann.*, lib. ii. MEIBOM., vol. i. p. 644. As to the prevalence of duelling amongst the Germanic races, see p. 688. SCHMIDT *Geschichte der Deutschen*, vol. ii. pp. 130, 131. OZANAM *Les Germains avant le Christianisme*, pp. 123, 124, 125.

masses, the first in honour of the Holy Ghost, the second in honour of the Holy Trinity, the third in honour of the Holy Cross. He had himself then arrayed in the best armour of the king, he begirt himself with the sword of Constantine, and holding in his hand the lance of Saint Maurice,* he mounted the king's best war-horse.† And when he was thus arrayed, and thus mounted, all who looked upon him declared that never had they seen a more perfect soldier, a finer champion, a taller, nor a stouter man.

The palmer then rode straight through the city to the place of battle, which was in the valley of Chitcomb, and there he awaited the arrival of Colibrond.

Colibrond had equipped himself with such heavy armour, that his horse was scarcely able to bear him. He was preceded to the field of battle by a waggon loaded with Danish axes, with great square mallets and chains, enormous iron clubs, with lances and crooks of iron, contrived for fastening on an adversary, and dragging him within the power of the flinger. No sooner had this demon seen the palmer hastening forward to encounter him, than he cried out in a loud voice, and commanded the palmer to descend from his horse, to prostrate himself on the earth, and declare his willingness to become his (Colibrond's) man.

The palmer upon beholding Colibrond, said in secret to himself—"Of a verity this is not a human being; but a "spirit of hell that is disguised beneath a mortal form."

---

* See W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 135, p. 217.

† "Scandens meliorem *dextrarium* regis." Knyghton, p. 2323. "Equo ejus militari, quem dextrarium vocant. W. Neubrig., lib. ii. c. 11. See Ducange, in verb. *dextrarii*.

And as he said this, he protected his own face, and all his body, with the sign of the most holy cross, and then commending himself to God, he urged with the spur his steed to a rencontre with Colibrond. Colibrond defied him to the combat. Guy then struck Colibrond in the centre of his shield, with a large lance, and such force, that the weapon was shivered to pieces. Colibrond withstood the shock firm and unshaken—he never gave ground an inch; but on the instant he returned the stroke with such unerring aim, and matchless vigour, that the horse of Guy was with that stroke deprived of head and neck, and both fell tumbling to the ground. Guy on the very instant that he felt himself and horse on the earth, bounded up like a valiant, accomplished, and noble knight as he was, and with his uplifted arm, and sword aimed a blow straight at the helmet of his adversary, but so enormously tall was the demon, that the arm of Guy was not long enough to reach high as the head, and the stroke consequently did not pass beyond the shoulder. Colibrond then aimed a blow with a square iron club at Guy, but the latter remarking how imminent and how mortal that blow must be if it struck him, opposed it with his shield, whilst at the same instant, and quick as the lightning's flash, he bounded on one side to escape the shock. Colibrond struck the boss of Guy's shield with such immense force, that the club leaped from his hand and fell to the ground. So awful was the noise made by its fall, that even Guy was astounded to hear it; but as Colibrond stretched forth his arm to lift his club from the earth, Guy anticipated the movement, and with his sword cut the hand sheer from the arm, and it too, by the divine mercy, was seen moveless on the ground. The Danes on beholding the blow were filled with fear, and

with a loud howl invoked their deities to the aid of Colibrond. On the other hand Athelstan, and the Christian English glorified Christ Jesus, and at their desire all the bells of the city were rung in honor, and to the praise of the Lord.

Meanwhile the battle continued between Guy and Colibrond. The valley resounded with the echo of their blows, and their strife lasted until the darkness of night began to overshadow them, when Colibrond, broken down by the loss of blood, and the agony that followed from his amputated arm, began to fail in his strength as in the vigour of his blows. At length the monomachy was brought to a complete close, for Guy with a tremendous sweep of his sword, and with all the force and power of his arm, struck his adversary such a blow, that his head and helmet were completely separated from the neck, and fell blood-reeking with the lifeless body at the feet of the conqueror.

It was a great victory—diffusing joy, securing peace, and protecting liberty in England, from the unjust claims, and iniquitous pretensions of the Danish king.*

---

* "Cujus victoriæ tripudio tota terra Angliæ quietis et libertatis de Danico rege gaudebat illæso privilegio," KNYGHTON, *de Event, Ang.*, lib. i. c. 5, pp. 2321, 2322, 2324. The Right Rev. Dr. Milner, in his "*History and Antiquities of Winchester*," points out with great clearness the improbabilities of the preceding narrative, such as that Athelstan should have been reduced to such straights in Winchester, either as to behold his chief city besieged, or place his sole hope of relief in a single champion, whilst he adds that all other circumstances related of this battle, are seen to be the inventions or exaggerations of the writers; such as the gigantic stature of the Dane, the pilgrimage of Guy, the vision of Athelstan, and the mode of conducting the combat, which favours more of the

Sithric, as we have before remarked, departed this life the year after his marriage, and the circumstance afforded to Athelstan the opportunity of uniting Northumbria to his crown, to which it was by ancient right attached, and its amalgamation with which, the exigency of recent cir-

---

fourteenth than the tenth century." The Right Rev. author is of opinion that, however disguised by additional and fictitious ornaments, there is to be found in the narrative, "the ground-work" of a fact—probably, as he suggests, "a duel of national gallantry" has been "magnified into a combat, on the issue of which the fate of two rival nations was supposed to hang." Amongst the monuments to shew that some such conflict as that alluded to in the text did take place, there are mentioned by Dr. Milner, "1st, Athelstan's chair, being a turret so called in the north wall of the city, from which he is said to have been a spectator of the combat. 2ndly,—A representation of the battle, in stone, which Wharton tells us formerly existed in the said wall. 3dly,—Two mutilated statues; one of a very tall man, the other of a little man, in the attitude of fighting; said, by Butler, in his Lives of the Saints, to have existed in the chapel of Guy's Cliff. 4thly,—*Colbrandis Ax*, as it is called by Rudborn, which was preserved in his time, in the treasury of the cathedral. *Hist. Maj.* There also it was in the reign of James I., as Tressel testifies, and probably continued until the universal pillage in the grand rebellion." MILNER's *History and Antiquities of Winchester*, vol. i., p. 110, see note (*) same page.

The following particulars respecting the hero of the preceding episode may be read with interest.

"There is a right goodly chappell of St. Mary Magdalene upon Avon river, *ripa dextra*, scant a mile above Warwike. This place of some is called *Gibcliffe*, of some *Guy-cliffe*; and auld fame remaineth with the people there that Guido E. of Warwike, in K. Athelston's dayes had a great devotion to this place, and made an oratory there. Some adde unto it, that after he had done great victories in outward parts, and had beene soe long absent, that he was thought to have beene dead, he came and livid in this place like an heremite, unknowen to his wife Felice, untill at the article of his death, he shewed what he was." LELAND's *Itienerary*, vol. iv, p. 63, quoted in the *Testimonia de T. Rosso*, p. xxiii. See ROSSIUS. *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, fol. 43, p. 54.

cumstances rendered indispensable.* He not only completely subdued the province, but he expelled from power a certain person named Adulf, who attempted to resist him.† And as a man of noble mind, whose ambition has been once excited, always aspires to the accomplishment of some achievement, greater than any that has been yet performed, so it was with Athelstan who forced Judwall king of all the Welsh, and Constantine king of the Scots, to resign their kingdoms to him. These were concessions which were speedily followed by their restoration to their respective thrones, and with all their former dignity, on condition that they should continue to reign, as dependent upon him; for he declared that "it was far more glorious to make a king, than to be a king."‡

In the year 927, Guthfrith the (Danish) king was expelled

---

* "Sed ut prædictum recolo, post annum vita deturbatus, occasionem Ethelstano exhibuit ut Northanhimbriam suæ parti jungeret, quæ sibi et antiquo jure et nova necessitudine competeret." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 134, p. 212. See p. 357. of this volume.

† "Provinciam illam sibi subejit, expulso quodam Aldulfo qui rebellabat." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131, p. 206.

‡ W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131, p. 206. The following is the language of the *Saxon Chronicle* as to the supremacy of Athelstan, in the year 926. "He," it says, "governed all the kings that were in this island:—first Howel, king of West Wales; and Constantine, king of the Scots; and Owen, king of Monmouth; and Aldred, the son of Eadulf of Bamborough. And with covenants and oaths they ratified their agreement in a place called Emmet, on the fourth day before the ides of July; and renounced all idolatry, and afterwards returned in peace." Ingram's translation, p. 140. See F. Wigorn, ad an. 926, p. 602, and Rog. de Wend., vol. i., p. 386, note 4, Bromton, p. 838. Knyghton, lib. iii. c. 4, p. 2484.

by Athelstan.* Anlaf, the son of Sithric fled to Ireland, his brother Guthfrith to Scotland; but the steps of the latter fugitive were speedily followed by royal messengers, despatched to Constantine king of the Scots, and Eugenius king of the Cumbrians, requiring his being delivered up to them, or in case of refusal, denouncing war against his protectors and harbourers.†

So far were these barbarous kings from entertaining the idea of mutinying against any demand of Athelstan, that without a moment's delay they repaired to a place called Dacor, where they surrendered themselves and their crowns to the king of the English, and there, in honour of the treaty which was entered into, the son of Constantine received the rites of baptism, Athelstan acting as his godfather on the occasion.‡

Meanwhile Guthfrith, under the guidance of a man named Turfrid, whilst preparations were making for the journey to meet Athelstan, escaped from his harbourers, made his escape by bye-roads out of the country, and shortly afterwards presented himself before the city of York, which he first attempted to besiege, and then, when he found he could neither appal the inhabitants by his threats, nor cajole them by his promises, he abandoned the project which he had first entertained, of gaining entrance into the town, and retaining possession of it. He was soon

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 134, p. 212.

‡ The son here referred to is probably the same who was afterwards delivered as a hostage to Athelstan, by the king of the Scots, "filium suum obsidem cum dignis muneribus illi dedit." F. Wigorn, ad an. 934, p. 603.

afterwards completely invested in his encampment by the king's soldiers, but he, as well as Turfrid, evaded the vigilance of their pursuers, and escaped from the toils in which they were enclosed. The death of Turfrid speedily followed this event; for he was shipwrecked at sea, and his body, consigned to the deep, became a prey to the fishes.

As to Guthfrith, he was doomed to endure many misfortunes. A fugitive by land, and a helpless wanderer by sea, he suffered great and manifold miseries; until at last, he presented himself as a suppliant at the court of king Athelstan. By the latter he was kindly and generously received; and for four days was there a profuse entertainment to welcome him; but Guthfrith, hardened in piracy, and one of those men to whom, as if they were fishes, the sea is their home, refitted his ships, and abandoned the court and kingdom of Athelstan.

Previous to this, however, Athelstan had taken care to level to the earth the fortress which the Danes had formerly constructed in York, because he would not leave to perfidy a lair, within which it might shelter itself. As to the vast spoil and treasure which was found piled up within this fortress, he generously bestowed it in equal shares upon all his men. In so doing, he merely acted in obedience with the impulse of his spirit, which would not permit him to soil his heart with the rust of accumulated riches; but which urged him to the munificent expenditure of all that he acquired upon monasteries, or his own faithful subjects.* To such objects as these, he, during his

* "Hoc enim vir ille animo imperaverat suo, ut nihil opum ad crumenas corraderet, sed omnia conquisita, vel *monasteriis*, vel fidelibus suis, munificus expenderet." W. Malmsb. Such was

entire life, devoted all the wealth he inherited from his ancestors, and all the gains that resulted from his victories. Ever willing to hear, and always kind in his manners, to those who had devoted their lives to God, he was with laymen alike pleasant and polite in his language; and whilst a due respect for his own royal dignity rendered him grave in the presence of the magnates of his kingdom, he was affable to persons of humble rank, whilst the poor, in his gentle discourses, were never made to feel that pride and haughtiness are to be identified with the pomp and power of a sovereign.

Athelstan, as we have learned, was thin in body, and his stature did not exceed the middle height. His hair, some of which we have seen, was yellow, and was beautifully interwoven with threads of gold.* His bravery as a soldier, and his humility as a man, made him most dearly loved by his people. His invincible constancy rendered him as much feared by the rebellious, as the fall of the thunderbolt.

Athelstan compelled the petty princes of North Wales, that is, of the Northern Britons, to come to a conference with him at the city of Hereford, and there, despite of their unwillingness, which they for some brief period of time exhibited, he obliged them to yield themselves to his supreme power, so that he carried into effect a project which

---

the generous spirit of a catholic king of England. To what king of England in latter times can these words of Malmsbury, or anything like them, with justice be applied? What subject have *they* rewarded—what Protestant charities have *they* founded *out of their own peculiar income?*

* "Capillo, ut ipsi ex reliquiis vidimus, flavo, filis aureis pulchre intorto." W. MALMSB.

no king before him had ventured even to contemplate, viz. that these Welshmen should pay annually to him, and avowedly as a tribute, twenty pounds of gold, three hundred pounds of silver, twenty-five thousand oxen, along with dogs, whose keen scent enables them to track out and pursue wild beasts, through the most difficult paths and most obscure retreats, as well as birds, that are taught to seek for and to catch their prey, in the boundless regions of the air.*

From Hereford Athelstan turned his attention to the Western Britons, the inhabitants of Cornwall.† These were boldly attacked by him, and driven from the city of Exeter, which up to that time they had been permitted to occupy, and to possess, as inhabitants, equal rights and privileges with its English citizens. He not only drove the Cornwallians out of Exeter, but he forced them to accept the near bank of the river Tamar as their boundary, whilst the river Wye was assigned by him as a limit to the North Britons. As to the city of Exeter itself, which the base race of the Welsh had contaminated by their

---

* "And then Athelstane, entering with his army into Wales, forced the princes thereof to pay a yearly tribute of £20 in gold, £300 in silver, and 200 head of cattle; which, notwithstanding, was not observed, as appears by the laws of Howel Dha, wherein it is appointed, 'That the prince of Abberffraw should pay no more to the king of London than £66 tribute; and that the princes of Dinefawr and Powis should pay the like sum to the prince of Aberffraw.'" CARADOC'S *History of Wales*, p. 48. See LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 108, 109. PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 460.

† We omit translating Malmsbury's fanciful derivation for the name of the inhabitants of Cornwall--"qui Cornewalenses vocantur; qui in occidente Britanniæ siti, cornu Galliæ ex obliquo respiciunt." See HARDY'S note (1) to *W. Malmsbury*, vol. i. p. 158. (E.H.S.)

domiciliation, he fortified it with towers, and begirt it with walls of hewn stone. Of this place, it may be observed, that though the land is so poor and sterile, that it can scarcely produce a crop of oats, and, not unfrequently, what it is seen to bear is nothing more than grainless stalks, still it is a city which, by reason of its magnificence, the wealth of its inhabitants, and the constant resort of strangers, is so abundantly provided with wares and merchandise, that there is no one thing necessary for the use of man, that he could desire to have, which he would not be sure to find there. Many are the noble monuments of Athelstan that are to be found within this city and its neighbourhood, but which can be more accurately described in the words of its inhabitants than they can be depicted by our pen.*

Such achievements as these won for him the praises of all Europe, and induced it to extol to the very skies his virtues and his valour. Foreign kings deemed it to be no bad policy to purchase his friendship by gifts, or by an alliance with his family. Thus for instance, a certain Harold, king of the Norwegians† sent to him as a present,

---

* The author (Malmsbury) repeats nearly the same phrases here used as to Exeter, in his account of the bishops of England. He adds some interesting particulars respecting St. Peter's monastery at Exeter:—"Hic Lefricus ejectis sanctimonialibus a sancti Petri monasterio, Episcopatum et canonicos statuit, qui contra morem Anglorum ad formam Lotharingorum uno triclinio comederent, uno cubiculo cubitarent. Transmissa est hujuscemodi regula ad posteros, quamvis pro luxu temporum nonnulla jam ex parte deciderit. Habentque clerici œconomum ab Episcopo constitutum, qui eis diatim necessaria victui, annuatim amictui commoda suggerat." *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 256.

† "Harold I. surnamed Härfager, king of Norway." HARDY, note (1) to W. MALMSBURY, vol. i. p. 215. (E.H.S).

a ship, the beaks of which were of gold,* the sails purple,† and the interior protected by an impenetrable shell‡ com-

* "Rostra aurea." W. Malmsb. In Snorro's description of the ship "the long serpent" of king Olaf, we have the same account given:—"Draconis imago qua prora quaque puppi auro tota cœlata obductaque erat." *Konung Olaf Tryggwason's Saga*, c. 94, vol. i. p. 316. As to the ships of the Northmen, see Torfæus, *Hist. Rer. Norveg.*, where we are told of an enormously long ship, built by Asmund, (married to the daughter of a Scottish prince,) "navem itaque *Gnodem* dictam, tantæ magnitudinis, ut cis mare Græcum pari mole nunquam ad id usque tempus structa alia memoretur, fabricandum curavit, qua longo tempore usus est, nomen inde Gnodenses assumpsit." Lib. vii. c. 5, § 2, vol. i. p. 314. See also lib. v. c. 19, vol. i. p. 220, lib. vi. § 3, c 1, vol. i. pp. 290, 291, lib. vii. § 2, c. 5, vol. i. p. 315, lib. ix. c. 33, vol. i. pp. 426, 427, lib. ix. c. 40, vol. i. p. 443, lib. ix. c. 48, vol. i. p. 452. Ships were made with iron beaks and sides, "a ferratis lateribus vel ferreo rostro vel barba *Jarnbardi* dicta." lib. viii. c. 11, vol. ii. p. 315. Various extraordinary qualities were attributed by the Northmen to their ships, such for instance as the *Ellidius*, which seemed to obey its masters' bidding; and another which always lent to one side in the water, once it lost its gallant commander. The most extraordinary of all ships was, however, that of Odin, which seemed to be composed of Indian rubber; "quam lini aut panni instar complicare potuit, quotiescumque libuit." Torfæus, lib. iii. c. 17, vol. i. p. 144. See as to the ships of the Northmen, Blackwell's *Edition of Mallet's Northern Antiquities*, pp. 177, 178, 179, 180. Encomium Emmae, pp. 8, 9. Maseres *Hist. Ang. Sel. Mon.* W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 188, vol. i. p. 321.

† The sails being of this colour prove that the ship was intended as a complimentary gift to a king. The following is the description given by a contemporary of a Northern king's fleet, when entering the Rhine in the year 826.

"Ecce volant centum per Rheni flumina puppes,
"Velaque candidolis consociata modis."
Ermold., lib. iv., 287, 288.

‡ "Densa *testitudine* clipeorum." W. Malmsb. "Both in land and sea fights the commanders appear to have been protected from missile weapons,—stones, arrows, spears,—by a shield-burg; that is, by a party of men bearing shields, surrounding them in such a way that the shields were a parapet, covering those within the

posed of golden-burnished shields.* The names of the messengers to whom this gift was entrusted were Helgrim and Osfrid, who were received with royal magnificence by Athelstan, in the city of York, and who, in the suitable presents bestowed upon them, found a consolation for all the fatigues of their voyage.†

---

circle. The Romans had a similar military arrangement of shields in sieges—the testudo." LAING's *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 478.

* In *Konung Harald Hürfager's Saga*, c. 19, we see the persons of different nations distinguished by their shields, "cælatis clypeis," and "albis clypæis." SNORRO, vol. i. p. 93. In the battle there described, the English and Scotch are represented as taking a part. See LAING's *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. p. 287.

† Much more is said in the Sagas of the Northmen, of the intercourse between Harald Hürfager and king Athelstan. Malmsbury's statement is worthy of being compared with the following:—

"At this time, a king called Athelstan, had taken the kingdom of England. He sent men to Norway, to king Harald, with the errand that the messengers should present him with a sword with the hilt and handle gilt, and also the whole sheath adorned with gold and silver, and set with precious jewels. The ambassadors presented the sword-hilt to the king, saying, 'here is the sword which king Athelstan sends thee, with the request that thou wilt accept it.' The king took the sword by the handle; whereupon the ambassadors said, 'Now thou hast taken the sword according to our king's desire, and therefore art thou his subject, as thou hast taken his sword.' King Harald saw now that this was a jest, for he would be subject to no man. But he remembered it was his rule, whenever anything raised his anger, to collect himself, and let his passion run off, and then take the matter into consideration coolly. Now he did so, and consulted his friends, who all gave him the advice to let the ambassadors, in the first place, go home in safety.

"The following summer king Harald sent a ship westward to England, and gave the command of it to Hauk Haabrok. He was a great warrior, and very dear to the king. Into his hands he gave his son Hakon. Hauk proceeded westward to England,

Henry the First, the son of Conrad (for there were many bearing the same name), king of the Germans, and em-

---

and found the king in London, where there was just at the time a great feast and entertainment. When they came to the hall, Hauk told his men how they should conduct themselves; namely, that he who went first in should go last out, and all should stand in a row at the table, at equal distance from each other; and each should have his sword at his left side, but should fasten his cloak so that his sword should not be seen. Then they went into the hall, thirty in number. Hauk went up to the king and saluted him, and the king bade him welcome. Then Hauk took the child Hakon, and set it on the king's knee. The king looks at the boy, and asks Hauk what the meaning of this is. Hauk replies, 'Harald, the king, bids thee foster his servant-girl's child.' The king was in great anger, and seized a sword which lay beside him, and drew it, as if he was going to kill the child. Hauk says, 'Thou hast borne him on thy knee and thou canst murder him if thou wilt; but thou wilt not make an end of all king Harald's sons by so doing. On that Hauk went out with all his men, and took his way direct to the ship, and put to sea,—for they were ready,—and came back to king Harald. The king was highly pleased with this; for it is the common observation of all people, that the man who fosters another's children is of less consideration than the other. From these transactions between the two kings, it appears that each wanted to be held greater than the other; but in truth there was no injury to the dignity of either, for each was the upper king in his own kingdom till his dying day.

"King Athelstan had Hakon baptized, and brought up in the right faith, and in good habits, and all sorts of exercises, and he loved Hakon above all his relations; and Hakon was beloved by all men. Athelstan was a man of understanding and eloquence, and also a good christian. King Athelstan gave Hakon a sword, of which the hilt and handle were gold, and the blade still better; for with it Hakon cut down a mill-stone to the centre eye, and the sword thereafter was called the Quernbiter. Better sword never came into Norway, and Hakon carried it to his dying day." LAING's *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. pp. 308, 309, 310. SNORRO, *Konung Harald Hårfager's Saga.*, c. 41, 42, 43, vol. i. pp. 119, 122. See TORFÆUS' *Hist. Rer. Norveg.*, lib. iv. c. 5, vol. ii. pp. 179, 180. GOTTLIEB WOHNIKE, *Sagen der Könige Norwegens*, vol. i. p. 468. PONTOPIDDAN, *Gest. Danor.*, vol. ii. pp. 68, 69, 70. LAPPENBERG, *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii.

peror of the Romans had demanded for his son Otho, the sister of Athelstan in marriage.* The emperor regarded the generous qualities of the noble line to which Athelstan belonged, as well as this king's great intellectual qualities, when he sought such a distant alliance, and preferred it to that of the many sovereign princes, whose dominions were bordering on his own; so completely were high rank, and generous spirit identified with Athelstan, that it might be said they dwelt peculiarly with him alone; and that no man living could be found more renowned by his birth, more illustrious by his position, more gallant in his bearing, or more practical in his

---

p. 106, suggests that the Athelstan referred to in the Saga of Snorro was "not the king of the English, but Guthrum—Æthelstan I. or II. king of the East Angles, to whom Harald (who became king in 863,) intrusted his son in his childhood." A suggestion, we may remark, which finds a strong corroboration from Torfæus, who describes the same Athelstan as capable of comprehending the forced allusions, and mysterious metaphors of the Northern scalds—an accomplishment, (if it were one) which it is not to be supposed an Englishman could possess, and which Torfæus, it may be observed, finds it difficult to account for.

"Quærente rege (Athelstano) quo pacto ab Eirico dimissus fuerit? Eigell rhythmo exposuit, qui adeo intricatus est, ut dubitem an etiam illi, qui in poesi patria versatissimi sunt, assequantur: si tamen librarii vitio corruptus non est. Illud satis mirari non possum, cum illo tempore linguam Anglicam magna ex parte ab hac veteri Norvegica diversam observem, rhythmos tamen tales Regibus aulicisque faciles fuisse intellectu: nisi forte lingua Danica, quæ toti septentrioni communis erat, ipsaque adeo poësis, in aulis principum, pariter quoque in Anglia, in deliciis fuerit, ut hodie Italica in aula Cæsarea, Turcica in aula Persica." TORFÆUS, *Hist. Norvegic.*, lib. 4, c. 7, vol. ii. p. 189.

* Of this marriage the princely historian Ethelwerd, in the dedication of his work to his relative Matilda:—

"Alias vero duo Ædeftanus rex tali ratione misit ad Oddonem, ut quæ ab iis placuisset sibi in matrimonium elegisset; cui *visa melior* Eadgyde, ex qua tu principium tenes nativitais," p. 831.

wisdom. This sagacious prince, bearing in mind that he had four sisters, alike in beauty, and in whom the only dissimilarity was that of years, sent, as we have already stated, two of them to the emperor, at the request of that monarch.* The third was united in marriage to Louis, Prince of the Aquitanians, and one of the surviving descendants of Charlemagne.†

As to Athelstan's fourth sister, it could with truth be affirmed of her that the charms which distinguished her other sisters were concentred in her, and rendered her beauty perfect. She was sought in marriage for Hugh, the leader of the Franks,‡ by his ambassadors. At the head of this embassy was Adulf, the son of the Earl of Flanders, by Ethelswitha, the daughter of king Edward ;§

---

* "Egregie binas stirpis mittendo puellas, ut sibi quam vellet sponsam licito sociaret. *Hist. Oddo.* MEIBOM., p. 713. It is not known to whom the second sister of Athelstan, sent to the emperor Otho, was married. All that 'Ethelwerd, the best authority on this point, can affirm is; "Alteram etiam subjunxit cuipiam regi juxta Jupitereos montes, de cujus prole nulla nobis notitia extet, tam pro extenso spatio, quam per obruptionem quodam modo temporum," p. 831. See LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 109, 110.

† "Louis King of Arles, son of Boson, married Eadgiva, daughter of Eadwerd the Elder." HARDY, note (2) to *W. Malmsbury*, vol. i. p. 216. (E.H.S).

‡ "Hugo *Rex* Francorum." Perhaps we should read here Hugo *dux* Francorum. Hugh the Great, count of Paris, and son of Robert I., king of France, is so designated in the French Chronicles. His marriage with Eadhild took place A.D. 926. (Bouquet, viii. 289)." HARDY, note (3) to *W. Malmsbury*, vol. i. p. 216. Roger de Wendover fixes the date of this marriage in the year 927, vol. i. p. 386.

§ "The negotiator was Adalolf, count of Boulonge, son of Baldwin, of Flanders, and Ælfthryth, a daughter of Ælfred." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 107, see note 3.

and who, in an assembly of the nobles at Abingdon, demanded her hand, and rendered his request acceptable by the presentation of the most magnificent gifts—gifts that were so gorgeous and so precious that they must have satiated the desires of the most avaricious, and contented the wishes of the most craving. These gifts consisted of aromatic substances, such as had never before been seen in England; of brilliant gems, and amongst these were deserving of being particularly specified the emeralds, whose grass green lustre dazzled whilst they delighted the eyes of all who beheld them; of many fleet and fully equipped steeds, and to which might be applied the words of Virgilius Maro, because of them it might be said,

"They champed their bits of yellow gold."*

Amongst these presents was a certain vase, composed of onyx, and sculptured with such a subtle, artistic hand, that as it was looked upon, the harvest field pourtrayed upon it seemed to incline in waving bends upon its surface, the vines to bud forth, as if with a rich germinating juice; and its engraven men to move, as if endowed with life;† whilst its shining and polished surface reflected, as

---

* "—— fulvum mandunt sub dentibus aurum."
VIRGIL. *Æneid*, lib. vii. 279.

† In this description of a splendid vase, Malmsbury seems to had floating in his mind the lines of Homer:

Εν δ' ετιθει τεμενος βαθυληϊον· ενθα δ' εριθοι
Ημων, οξειας δρεπανας εν χερσιν εχοντες·
Δραγμάτα δ' αλλα μετ' ογμον επηρτιμα πιπτον εραζε,
Αλλα δ' αμαλλοδετηρες εν ελλεδανοισι δεοντο.
* * * * * *
Εν δ' ετιθει σταφυλησι μεγα βριθουσαν αλωην
Καλην, χρυσειην· μελανες δ' ανα βοτρυες ησαν.
HOMER'S *Iliad*, lib. xviii. l. 550, 562.

if it were a mirror, the mimic face and form of the beholder. Amongst these presents also was the sword of Constantine the Great, whose name, as that of its former possessor, was inscribed upon it, in letters of gold; and upon its pommel, rising up above the rich plates of gold, was to be seen one of the four nails which the Jewish faction had used in their afflicting punishment of the body of our Lord.* With this, there was the lance of Charlemagne—the self-same lance which, when that invincible emperor was waging war upon the Saracens, he never brandished against the foe, that he did not depart a victor from the battle-field. It was said that this was the identical weapon which, when grasped in the hand of the centurion, had inflicted the precious wound which opened Paradise for us miserable mortals.† Along with this, there was also the pennon of the most blessed martyr, and leader of the Theban legion, St. Maurice;‡ and which Charlemagne was wont to dis-

---

* See as to the disputed point of the number of nails used in the crucifixion of our Lord, PAPEBROCHE, *Respons.* art. xx. § 3, 6. *Supp. Apol. Act. Sanct.* pp. 609, 610.

† The description here applied, hypothetically, to the lance of Charlemagne, belongs of right to that which was called "the lance of St. Maurice," as appears by the words of Pope Gregory IX., addressed to Frederic II., Emperor:—"Crux ubi est lignum Domini, et lancea ubi clavus ejus consistit, ante in processionibus solennibus deportantur. * * Lanceam considera diligenter, cujus acumen latus ejus aperuit de quo Christus largiter sacramenta tuæ salutis effudit." DUCANGE, in verb. *Lancea, S. Mauricii.*

‡ "The story of the martyrdom of St. Maurice and the Theban legion, in the third century, appears to be apocryphal; it was first published about the middle of the fifth century, by Eucherius, bishop of Lyons. See a dissertation on this subject in the Bibliothèque Raisonnée, tom. xxxv. pp. 427—454." HARDY note (2) to *W. Malmsbury*, vol. i. p. 217. For incontrovertible proofs of the truth of the statements of the martyrdom of St. Maurice and

play in his war in Spain, whenever he desired to disperse and put to flight the close serried ranks of his ferocious opponents. There was also amongst these presents a diadem, rich with its thick gold, but still more rich with its precious jewels, the splendour of which was so great, that they dazzled with their sparkling light the eye, as it attempted to look fixedly upon them. There was, moreover, a particle of the holy and ever-adorable cross, inclosed in chrystal, through whose clear but thick medium the sight was permitted to rest on the wood, to distinguish its colour, and to discern its size. Last of all, there was (and enclosed in the same manner) a fragment of the crown of thorns, which the ribald rage of a ruffian soldiery had imposed as a mark of derision upon the most blessed head of our Saviour.

The magnificent king Athelstan could not but be rejoiced with so many and such valuable gifts as these. He repaid them with presents almost equal to themselves in richness, and bestowed with them his sister—the wished-for bride of an enamoured suitor.

Succeeding kings felt that they were rich in being the inheritors of some of the presents made on this occasion. A part of the holy cross and sacred crown were, however, assigned by Athelstan to the monastery of Malmsbury, and it is under the guardianship of these that, we may well believe, the place has flourished, despite the wreck of its liberties, and the foul deeds of its interested calumniators and foes.*

---

his companions, and of the miracles with which their sacred relics have been honoured, see BUTLER's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. viii. pp. 494, 495, 496.

* W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 134, 135, vol. i. pp. 212

In the year 927, Wulfhelm, archbishop of Canterbury, proceeded on a journey to Rome.*

—218. See INGULPHUS *Hist.* pp. 37, 38. KNYGHTON, p. 2321. The last words of the preceding long extract from Malmsbury are worthy of being given in the original: "Partem vero crucis et coronæ Malmesbiriæ delegavit, quorum sustentaculo adhûc credo vigere locum, tot libertatis naufragia, tot calumniatorum injurias, passum." Upon these words the Rev. John Sharpe remarks: "He" (Malmsbury) "has apparently the oppressions of bishop Roger constantly before him." To this we may subjoin, that as long as there was a lively and true faith in England, so long were the places, the depositaries of such precious relics, preserved from the hands of pillagers; and so long too were the labours, the learning, the libraries, and all the good works of its pious, erudite, and charitable monks respected. Upon the destruction of Malmsbury, and the dispersion of its vast collection of manuscripts, see vol. i. pp. 520, 521, of this work.

* "And her Wulfelm arceb for to Rome." *Sax. Chron.* Was this journey to Rome injurious to "the liberties" of Englishmen? or did the pious archbishop learn at the seat of the apostles, that one of his first duties as a christian and a citizen was to mitigate the miseries of the unfortunate, and promote the enfranchisement of slaves? The following extract from the laws of Athelstan ought to be a satisfactory solution of these questions:

"I, Athelstan, king, make known to all my reeves within my realm, *with the counsel of Wulfhelm, my archbishop*, and of all my other bishops and God's servants, for my sins' forgiveness, that I will that *ye entirely feed one poor Englishman, if ye have him, or that* YE FIND ANOTHER. From two of my 'feorms' let there be given him *every month one 'amber' of meal, and one shank of bacon, or one ram with iv pence, and clothing for twelve months,* EVERY YEAR. And that *ye redeem* one *white-theow,* (slave) and let all this be done for the Lord's mercy, and my love, *under witness of the bishop*, in whose jurisdiction it may be. And if the reeve omit this, let him make 'bot' with XXX shillings, and let *that money be distributed to the needy* who are in the 'tun' where this remains unfulfilled." THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England, 'Laws of Athelstan,'* p. 84, (folio edition). Archbishops of Can-

About the year 928, feelings of the strongest affection, and sentiments of the greatest regard, existed between king Athelstan and Robert duke of Normandy. Each was possessed in his respective dominions of great power, and alike determined, in case the necessities of war should require it, mutually to aid and sustain the other.*

In the year 929 king Athelstan determined upon visiting the relics of saints which were in his kingdom, in order that he might, in presence of those relics, offer up his prayers.† In pursuit of this pious intention, his first devout visit was make to Glastonbury. There was at Glas-

terbury do not in modern times travel to Rome; but the poor are not fed abundantly with mutton, bacon, and meal, whilst the white-theows are to be found in St. Pancras and Andover union workhouses. For further particulars as to Wulfhelm, see R. DICET, p. 453. BROMTON, pp. 838, 840, 841. GERVAS, p. 1644.

* ROG. DE WENDOV. "This fabled alliance between the two sovereigns occurs in the history of *William of Jumieges*, c. ii. § 6, and is recorded as having taken place before 876, forty-eight years before Athelstan ascended the throne." COXE, notes to *Rog. de Wendover*, (E. H. S.) The name is not of much importance, and is frequently mistaken by the ancient historians. The fact—that of a friendly feeling between the Norman and English rulers at this period—is of some interest; and seems to be confirmed by Malmsbury, who observes as to Athelstan—"Itaque ex transmarina Britannia et Normannia, quippe cum Rollone Comite amico obligatus fœdere, &c." Lib. v. *de Pontificibus*, p. 363. In the year 928, the duke of Normandy, was William Longsword. See RICHER, lib. i. c. 53.

† "Rex Ethelstanus reliquias sanctorum regni sui orationis gratia petere decernens." ROG. DE WEND. As to the gifts of Athelstan to Glastonbury, and his particular reverence for that monastery, see W. MALMSB., *De Antiq. Glaston.*, pp, 316, 317. See also ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. ii, pp. 250, 251.

tonbury at that time, a certain noble matron, named Elfleda, a niece to the king, and who, upon the death of her husband, had determined to lead the holy life of a widow; and for that purpose had chosen as her abode a place which lay on the west side of the monastery. By this religious female a banquet was prepared for the king previous to his arrival, as she had foreseen and predicted that he would visit Glastonbury for the purpose of there offering up his prayers.*

In the year 932, Frithestan bishop of Winchester, a man conspicuous for his sanctity, ordained the holy bishop Birnstan as his successor in the see. The latter was, in sooth, a truly religious man, who offered up a mass every day for the dead, and who nightly walked around the graveyards, whilst he recited the psalms for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed. One night, whilst thus piously engaged, and when he had come to the concluding words of the holy office—"*May they rest in peace!*" he heard on a sudden, as if the voices of a multudinous army burst out of the graves, and respond to him in one single united—"*Amen!*"†

---

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i. p. 387. A miracle is stated by the same author to have been worked by the saint and princess Elfleda, which we omit. The fact of Athelstan's visiting the relics of saints, merits preservation, as shewing that Athelstan, like Alfred the Great, had a deep veneration for saintly relics. As to Elfleda, her pious death will be found commemorated in the life of St. Dunstan, by one who was his contemporary, and it is not improbable had seen and known this holy and royal widow. "—— Post Missæ mysterium, post saluberrimum Eucharistiæ gustum, ipsa pariter cum finita Missa vitam felicem in Domino Jesu Christo finiret." *Act. Sanct.* (Mai), vol. iv. p. 350. c. 2. § 11.

† "Quadem vice hoc agens, dum expletis omnibus subjungeret, Requiescant in pace: subito voces quasi exercitus infiniti e sepul-

Edwin the atheling was in the year 933 drowned at sea.* This was said to be done by order of king Athelstan ;† for upon the death of Elfred—of that person, who had so audaciously opposed himself to Athelstan's elevation to the throne, and had then with his associates secretly conspired against his sovereign,—it had been alleged by the foes to Edwin, that he was one of the conspirators, and had plotted for the destruction of his brother.‡ It was a foul crime to prefer so base an accusation when its evil result must inevitably have been to annihilate fraternal affection.

In vain did Edwin both personally affirm, and by messengers declare, and by oath testify, that he had ever preserved an unbroken fealty to his brother. In vain did he do all this; for he was driven into exile. The whispered

---

chris audivit respondentium, Amen." F. WIGORN, pp. 602, 603. See ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. pp. 388, 389. R. DE DICET, *Abb. Chron.*, p. 454. BROMTON. *Chron.*, p. 838. W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 243, where some very interesting facts will be found respecting the holy Birnstan. A miracle similar to that mentioned in the text, is stated to have occurred to St. Francis Fabriano, which is worthy of being quoted, on account of the observation with which it is accompanied:

"Cum aliquando Missam pro defunctis celebraret affectuosius, vehementerque compateretur animabus dura tormenta patientibus, et in fine sacrum mysterium clauderet illa deprecatiuncula, Requiescant in pace; multorum exaudita est vox alacriter respondentium, Amen: quos vel Angelos ministrantes sacrificanti, vel animas, et preces sancti viri a purgatorii ergastulo liberatas, judicare licebit." *Act. Sanct.* (April), vol. iii. pp. 89, 90. *Vit. B. Francis Fabrian*, c. i. § 5. This holy saint was a great collector of books —"quos emi fecit pecunia a patre suo ultimis tabulis in hunc finem legatam." Ibid.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† ROG. DE WEND., vol. i, p. 388.

‡ W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 139. vol. i, p. 223.

insinuations of some villains were of more avail upon a mind that was affected with the many cares of royalty, than the youth of him, whose tender years excited the pity of strangers. Athelstan, forgetful of the ties of blood, doomed Edwin to be driven out of the kingdom; and he even determined that this sentence should be enforced with an unheard-of barbarity; for Edwin was, in accordance with his orders, placed with a single squire on board of a vessel, old and dilapidated, and without an oar, or oarsman.

For a long time fortune seemed to labour in restoring the innocent youth to land. At length, the exiles found themselves in the wide ocean, and saw their weak sails shattered by a furious storm of wind. Edwin, a delicate youth, unused to hardship, and unable to bear his wretchedness, despaired of life, and casting himself into the sea, gained the death he sought amid its waves. The squire acted far more wisely. He tried to prolong his life, and at one time, by avoiding the bursting swell of the billows, which threatened to overwhelm him, and at another, employing his feet as oars, he was at last enabled to bring to land the body of his master, at that part of the coast in which the narrow sea runs between Dover and Whitsan.*

The rage of Athelstan abated, and when, with a cool mind and a calm judgment, he looked back upon what had occurred, he conceived an absolute horror of the deed, submitted himself to a penance of seven years, and

* In former times the passage between England and France was made between Dover and Whitsan. "Louis le Jeune king of France, when he went on pilgrimage to Thomas of Canterbury, humbly besought that saint that no person might be shipwrecked between Dover and Witsan." CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i, p. 320.

avenged the death of a brother upon him by whose false information it had been caused.

The calumniator was the king's cup-bearer—a person who had availed himself of his position to suggest to the king's mind what were his own suspicions. Upon a solemn festival day, this same person was engaged in serving wine, when as he was in the midst of the royal banquetting hall, he slipped on one foot, but immediately recovered himself with the other, and on the instant he called attention to the fact, by the use of an expression, which was fatal to himself:—"Thus," said he "does brother help brother."* The king heard the expression—he upbraided the traitor that he had deprived him of a brother whose death he should ever deplore, and whose life, if he had been spared, might have been so useful to him. He then directed that the faithless servant should be put to death.

There is an air of versimilitude in these incidents respecting the death of the king's brother; but we are the less disposed to pledge ourselves to their truth, when we consider how truly great and wonderful were his affection and his tender care for all his other brothers; who were but boys at the period of their father's death, and yet were cherished by him with extreme fondness when young, and made participators in his royal powers when they grew up to man's estate. As regards his sisters, we have already narrated with what great matches he provided such of them as at their father's death were unmarried and undowried.†

* An expression similar to this will be found ascribed to Earl Godwin in the reign of Edward the Confessor. See ROG. DE WEND., a. 1054, vol. i. p. 492.

† W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 139, 140, vol. i. pp.

In the year 934, the truly valiant king Athelstan directed a large fleet, and an immense body of mounted soldiers to make an attack on Scotland, in consequence of the Scotch king Constantine having violated the treaty into which he had entered.* In combining together these numerous forces, Athelstan resolved to employ them against the Northumbrian Danes as well as the Scotch, so that he might inflict condign punishment upon the perfidy of one nation and the treachery of the other.†

223, 225. "Mildeltunensem fecit rex Ethelstanus pro anima fratris sui Edwini, quem pravo consilio Anglia ejecit." *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 251. See H. HUNT., lib. v. p. 354. R. HOVEDEN, p. 422. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. pp. 389, 391. S. DUNELM. *Hist.*, p. 134, 154. BROMTON, p. 838. LAPPENBERG, in his *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 100, mentions a brother of Athelstan, who, under the religious name of Gregorius, was a monk in Germany. May not this *Gregorius* have been Edwin, supposed by Malmsbury to have been drowned at sea? This suggestion saves the reputation of Athelstan from the only stain that rests upon it. If the suggestion, be well founded it supplies an account of a son of Edward the Elder not otherwise mentioned; and it is consistent with all the other parts of Athelstan's character—his love for his brothers, his generous disposition, his piety, his respect for monks, his munificent donations to monasteries. Even the Anti-Catholic Lappenberg admits this with respect to him.

"When the power and reputation of the king were daily increasing throughout Europe, in consequence of such brilliant alliances, he was unremitting in his endeavours, by a liberal distribution of the wealth he had acquired by conquest or otherwise, to the monasteries, not only of his own country, but of foreign parts, to provide both for his earthly glory and for the eternal salvation of his soul. It is related that an honourable mission was sent by him to many of the monasteries of Switzerland, particularly to the Scottish abbey of St. Gall, and that Athelstan, by his envoy Cynewold, bishop of Worcester, was admitted among the spiritual brotherhood of that cloister." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 110, 111. See as to the pious and princely Gregory, ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Anglican.*, vol. iii. p. 284, § 9, ad an. 945.

* F. WIGORN, p. 603.

† "Gentem perfidam Dacorum, et infidam Scottorum in exter-

On his march with the entire of the English army towards Scotland, Athelstan visited the shrine of St. Cuthbert, to beg the intercession of that saint, and to bestow many gifts, such as it became a king to offer, for the ornament and decoration of a church.* The gifts then bestowed are still preserved in the church of Durham,† as perpetual memorials of the monarch's pious devotion for the church of the sanctified Cuthbert.‡ What these gifts were are regularly set down in one of the charters. Along with these the king bestowed not less than twelve vills upon the church for the sustentation of those who served at its altars. The names of these vills we do not deem it to be necessary to set down here, as they will be found transcribed elsewhere. * * * The king's army also, by his command, bestowed more than ninety six pounds of silver upon the shrine of St. Cuthbert. The king commended himself and his army to the patronage of St. Cuthbert, and as he was on the point of proceeding

---

minium traducere disponens, confertissimum duxit exercitum terra et mari in Nordhumbram et Scotiam." H. HUNT., lib. v. p. 354.

* S. DUNELM. *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 18, p. 25.

† "Usque *hodie* servata,"—S. DUNELM—that is, many years previous to "the religious reformation."

‡ The gifts have disappeared, but a list of them still remains. Amongst them we find mentioned "a copy of the Gospels" (textum Evangeliorum) "a silver chalice, and two patenas, the one gilded with gold and the other of Greek workmanship" (unum calicem argenteum, et duas patenas, alteram auro paratam alteram Græco opere fabrefactam) "a crucifix beautifully encrusted with gold and ivory," (unam crucem auro et ebore artificiose paratam) "a mass-book and two copies of the Gospels richly decorated with gold and silver," (unum missalem, et duos Evangeliorum textus, auro et argento ornatos), &c. &c. &c. S. DUNELM., *Hist. S. Cuthbert*, p. 75.

against the enemy, he besought of his brother Edmund that should any misfortune occur to him, his body might be borne to the church of St. Cuthbert, and there interred.

With his land and sea forces Athelstan then defeated Oswin, king of the Cumbrians, and Constantine king of the Scots.* The land army wasted Scotland as far as Dunfoeder and Westmore, and the fleet as far as Caithness;† until at length the Scottish king Constantine, coerced by the superior force of Athelstan, had to yield his son as a hostage, and with him many gifts. Then peace was renewed between the two kings, and Athelstan returned in triumph to Wessex.‡

In the year 935, Elphegus became bishop of Winchester.§ This Elphegus, a religious monk, and surnamed "the Bald," was a relation of St. Dunstan.‖ It was upon the death of the holy father Birnstan, that Elphegus, with the assent of king Athelstan, and amid the universal acclamations of the clergy and laity, was raised from the condition of being a monk in Glastonbury to the rank of a bishop in Winchester.¶ As a youth it had been the constant desire and the unceasing study of Elphegus, to surpass all his companions in meekness, mildness, and

---

* S. Dunelm., *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 18, p. 25.

† *Chron. Mailros*, 934, p. 147.

‡ F. Wigorn, p. 603. See R. Hoveden, p. 422. W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131, 134, vol. i. pp. 206, 212. Fordun, *Scot. Hist.*, lib. iv. c. 21, 22, pp. 671, 672.

§ *Sax. Chron.*

‖ F. Wigorn, p. 603.

¶ Rudborne, *Hist. Maj.*, lib. iii. c. 8, p. 213.

affability—to preserve his purity untarnished—to avoid every unlawful pleasure—to desire solely what was decorous—to abominate even the semblance of what was unbecoming—to seek the conversation of the old and the wise—to avoid the pastimes of the young and giddy—to be abstinent of food, and moderate in sleep—to be at all times grave, discreet, and collected—to begin every good work with a firm resolution, and to adhere to it with unshaken and unabated confidence. Such was Elphegus, always devoted to the study of sacred writings, ever practising their precepts, unceasingly avoiding the occasions of sin, and perpetually seeking the means of strengthening the habits of virtue. Worthy of the name even of a magnificent scholar, by his profound and varied knowledge he proved by his skill in many instruments of music, that it was the science of which beyond all others he was pre-eminently master.*

Whilst Dunstan was still a youth, the hereditary enemy of mankind had filled his heart with a love for the world, and made him feel a desire for female society.† At the same time, his relative, Elphegus, surnamed the Bald—that ever faithful bishop, besought with prayers, and warned Dunstan with spiritual admonitions, that he should become a monk. The latter, however, instigated by his diabolical enemy, refused to listen to his relative, and was disposed

---

* CAPGRAVE, *Vit. Elpheg.*, as quoted in ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 259, § 1.

† "—— Ille avitus humani generis inimicus ————. Primum enim mulierum illi injecit amorem, quo per familiares mulierum amplexus, mundanis oblectamentis frueretur." BRIDFERTH, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 2, § 7. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 348, 349.

to prefer the luxuries of the world to the coarse habits, the hard fare, and the mortified life of a monk.* As soon as the holy man of God heard the words of Dunstan, and found that they manifested the determination to reject his entreaties, and refuse his prayers, he sighed deeply, and besought of the King of Heaven, that He would be pleased to correct the judgment of Dunstan, and compel him to feel that the warning which had been given to him could not, with safety, be despised. The mercy of God was in a moment of time exhibited. A fact confirmed the truthful admonition of the bishop. Dunstan felt as if all the veins in his body were about to burst—an agonizing pain thrilled through his frame—he had a sensation as if he were about to be covered from head to foot with a leprosy; and as if life, and all hope of life, were about to be taken from him. He stood corrected, in presence of such a dire

---

* This is not a literal translation of the original: "Quod ille instinctu præfati fraudatoris renuntians, maluit sponsare juvenculam, cujus quotidie blanditiis foveretur; quam more monachorum bidentinis indui panniculis." BRIDFERTH, c. 2, § 7, p. 349.

Mr. Wright tells us that "Dunstan was passionately enamoured of a maiden of great beauty, of a rank of life equal to his own, and endowed with accomplishments congenial to his own character; and that he sought to marry her." *Biog. Brit. Lit.* i. 447. "I suspect that this maiden, whose beauty, birth, and accomplishments are so accurately described, is a mere creature of the imagination. At least she has no existence in the works of the writers to whom we are referred for her history." Bridferth, f. 64, and of Osbern, p. 95. "All that we learn from Bridferth is, that at first, Dunstan thought the company of a young wife preferable to the hard fare of a monk, but changed his mind during his sickness; from Osbern, that he deliberated quid in vita quam maxime appetendum fuisset, virtus an voluptas, uxor an virginitas. The lady herself made her appearance in the pages of Mr. Turner; but where she acquired her beauty and other accomplishments I know not." LINGARD'S *Anglo Saxon Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 271, (ed. 1845).

calamity. He sent in all haste for the bishop whom he had before contemned—declared that, as a penitent, he was willing to submit to his pious injunctions. The bishop did visit Dunstan, and then, as soon as his soul had received consolation, and that the fault he had committed was amended, Elphegus consecrated the youth to God, as a monk.*

Elphegus excelled in the possession and the practice of many virtues; graces seemed to superabound in him; and amongst other things that may be mentioned to his honour, was the gift of prophecy, for which he even became renowned.† Two instances may serve as sufficient proofs of this fact. The first occurred upon an Ash-Wednesday,‡ when, in accordance with the usual practice, penitents are excluded from the precincts of the church; and the laity are admonished that they should fast and abstain from pleasures which, however lawful, should, in order that persons may obtain the worthy fruits of penance, be no longer indulged in; because, as the good bishop observed, "you have but too often done that it was not fitting for "you to do, and now you should abstain from what, at

---

* Bridferth, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 2, § 7. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 348, 349. See p. 362, § 11, 12.

As a monk, St. Dunstan proved that he was not only pre-eminent in piety, but also a perfect master in all the arts and sciences, to which the monks devoted those hours which were not assigned to religious exercises. His biographer, Osbern, states of him; "Præterea manu aptus ad omnia; posse facere picturam, litteras formare, scalpello imprimere, ex auro et argento, ære et ferro, quicquid liberet operari." Vit. S. Dunstan, c. i. § 7. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 361. See Gervas, *Act. Pont.* Cantuar. p. 1646.

† W. Malmsb. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 243.

‡ "Dies erat cinerum."

"another period, it would not be wrong in you to do." All, with one exception, who heard this discourse, listened with reverence to it. That one, however, in order that he might excite the laughter of the listeners, declared that he could not, and would not controul his passions—that he could not abstain from food, and refrain from pleasure—and that he was determined so to indulge himself on that following night.

The voice of the bishop was instantly heard by those present sighing forth: "Alas! poor wretch, thou little "knowest what a day to-morrow will be for thee!"

It was a frightful prophecy, which the sudden death of the debauchee awfully verified; for the very next morning he was found lifeless in his bed—strangled, as it would seem, by the Devil himself.

The second instance of Elphegus's gift of prophecy was this. He bestowed at the same time, and the same day, the order of priesthood upon three monks, Dunstan, Ethelwold, and a certain person named Ethelstan, who afterwards apostatized—renounced the virtues of a monk—abandoned his vow of purity—and sighed forth his last breath in the very filth of abomination.

Upon the conclusion of the ceremonies, this bishop, of pious memory, addressing his assistants, said: "I have "this day, in the presence of God, placed my hand upon "three men, two of whom have been born to be bishops. "One of these shall be bishop in Worcester, and after-"wards in Canterbury: the second shall, in due and "rightful succession, fill at the proper time the see I now "occupy: the third, immersing himself in the gulf of car-"nality, shall die the death of a sinner."

Ethelstan, who in consequence of a relationship between

him and the bishop, was permitted to be in his society, when he uttered these words, petulantly asked him, "Shall "I be one of the two destined to be raised to the dignity "of a bishop?"

"No," replied Elphegus, "thou never shalt have part "nor share in the dignity of which I have this day spoken, "nor wilt thou even continue to wear those vestments "which thou hast this day asked for, and obtained in pre-"sence of thy fellow men."

To what an exalted dignity was the supremely sanctified spirit of Elphegus elevated, when it was thus permitted to him to penetrate through the dark and misty clouds, which cover and conceal the secrets of Heaven! The words that he emitted on this occasion did not fall upon barren earth; but all bore in time their ripe fulfilment, in the hardy and indubitable development of circumstances. Dunstan and Ethelwold held by the narrow path which leads to life everlasting. Both became distinguished as good bishops. As to the third, he travelled on the broad highway of the world.*

In the year 936 the duke Hugh sent ambassadors to England, for the purpose of inviting Louis, son of king Charles, to take upon himself the crown of France.† Eloquent ambassadors were sent to Louis by the duke, for the purpose of persuading the young king, in the name of the duke, and of the other great men of the land, that

---

* W. Malmsb., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 245. Rudborne, lib. iii, c. 8, p. 213. Higden, *Polychron*, lib. vi. p. 262. S. Dunelm, *Hist.* p. 155. Bromton, pp. 838, 839. See *Evident. Eccl. Cantuar.*, p. 2219. *Act. Sanct.* (Mart.) vol. ii. pp. 229, 231.

† Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 391.

he should return amongst them; and these ambassadors were authorised to pledge themselves by oath, for his safety during the voyage, and to announce to him that the leaders of the nation would come to meet him even at the sea-shore.*

The ambassadors instantly repaired to Boulogne. They there embarked—their sails were swollen with prosperous gales, and they were speedily borne across to England. At the time of their arrival, king Athelstan was in the city called York (Eurvich), with his nephew Louis, and where he was arranging with his subjects the affairs of his kingdom. To this place the ambassadors repaired. They obtained access to the king, and then saluting him, on the part of the duke and the great men amongst the Gauls, with all due and befitting honor, they in the following terms submitted what was the object of their embassy.

"The good-will of the duke, as well as of all who have "power amongst the Gauls, has caused us to come hither "through the waves of an unknown sea. Such is the will "of all—such the unanimous assent of all. Rodolph of "happy memory being now removed from this earth, the "duke has laboured, and has succeeded in procuring the "succession of Louis to the throne, even though there "were many unwilling to agree to this, because being par-"ticipators in the arrest of the father, they were fearful "of being regarded as objects of suspicion by the son.

---

* Richer, *Hist.*, lib. ii. c. 2. The monkish author Richer, from whose writings we quote, wrote in the tenth century. His work was not discovered until the year 1833. The particulars stated in the text refer to an interesting fact in English history, and are now for the first time translanted into the English language.

"However, the exertions of the duke have been so far "successful, that all have willingly, and even joyfully con- "ceded to his desire. Beyond all other things, the unani- "mous wish is for Louis; and to all men nothing can be "more dear, and nought more precious than his health, "his happiness, and his safety. All desire to have re- "stored to them, him whom they wish to see reign for the "good, and happiness of the Gauls. They desire then "a time to be fixed, at which with all the great men of the "land they may meet at the sea-shore the sovereign who "is destined to reign over their country."

Athelstan was distrustful of these strangers, and therefore required that they should confirm their words, and give proof of their fealty by their oaths. The requisition was at once complied with, and the time fixed when a solemn conference between both parties should take place.

Rich gifts were bestowed by the king on the ambassadors. They returned across the sea to Gaul, bringing on the part of the king his thanks to the duke, and promises of his majesty's hearty and sincere friendship for the part he had taken, in advocating his rights, and elevating him to the throne.

The duke and the other great men amongst the Gauls proceeded to Boulogne, for the purpose of receiving their lord the king. As soon as they arrived, they arranged themselves along the sea-shore, and indicated their presence to those on the opposite coast, by setting fire to some cottages. King Athelstan, accompanied by the royal cavalry, was on the opposite coast with his nephew, for the purpose of sending him to the expectant Gauls. By the king's order, some houses were set fire to in order that

those on the other side of the sea might know that he had arrived.*

---

* "—— *Tuguriorum* incendio presentiam suam iis qui in altero litore erant ostendebant. * * * Adelstanus * * * cujus jussu domus aliquot succensæ, sese advenisse trans positis demonstrabant." RICHER. According to this statement cottages were burnt at Boulogne, houses set on fire in England, as beacons to indicate the presence of friendly forces. We do not dispute the authority of Richer, describing the contemporaneous events in his own country; but we doubt his correctness, when he affirms that Athelstan so treated the mansions of his subjects. We believe that the use of beacons were well known in England, at the time; and that they were subsequently introduced into Norway by Hakon, Athelstan's foster-son, who in adopting them, as well as other means for defending a country from foreign invasion, imitated that which he had seen practised in this country. See SNORRO, *Konung Hakon Adalsten's Fostres Saga*, c. 21, 22. vol. i. pp. 149, 150. The following is the statement of Torfæus on these points. It is important as indicating how much the Northmen borrowed from the English; and from it, we may with safety infer, that the materials which supplied the fire-beacons of Athelstan were not composed of the ruined houses of his subjects.

"—— Totius regni Norici maritimas provincias, quosque salmones flumina invadentes longissime pertingunt, in minutiores partes descripsit, quas vernacula lingua *stipreidr* seu societates nauticas, appellavit, quarum certum numerum singulis satrapiis (*Fylke* nuncupant) definivit: unde iis etiam certus suppetendarum navium numerus constabat. Nam singulis societalibus singulæ naves ad belli usum instructæ imperabantur: certus insuper locorum in singulis numerus, et magnitudinis mensura, certus etiam nautarum, classiariorum, armorumque modus, certa cibariorum pondera assignata. * * * Tum ut ad omnem externorum hostium insultum omnes viri liberi armis ferendis idonei, singuli viritim clypeo, hasta, teloque ad ictus inferendos idoneo instructi, in suis quisque societatibus præsto adessent, idque sine exceptione, aut ullo excusationis prætextu. Tributorum autem, quæ pater ejus per totum regnum in singula capita imposuit, tantum ad extruendas naves ordinavit, quantum a maritimis Thrandiæ cæterisque tractibus exigi solvique solebat. Et ne ulla memorabilis clades improviso accipi vel latius spargi posset, de pyris in excelsiorum montium jugis præperandis, struibus nempe aridorum lignorum erigendis, nec

King Athelstan then sent the bishop Odo, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, (a man, whose eloquence was not less remarkable than his integrity,*) to the Gauls on the opposite coast, to declare to them, that he was perfectly willing to send Louis to them, provided that the same honor, like privileges, and equal dignity were conceded to Louis amongst the Gauls, as he (Athelstan) possessed and enjoyed amongst the English people; that in requiring these conditions from them, he only asked for what should be justly conceded, and that if they agreed to these terms, they should bind themselves by oath to their due fulfilment. But that if they were unwilling to assent to such terms, then he (Athelstan) would bestow some of his dependent kingdoms upon his nephew, with which he might be well content to pass his days in peace with his people, free from care, and undisturbed by the solicitations of those who must then be regarded by him, as foreigners.

The duke and the other great men amongst the Gauls declared to Odo, that they would agree to these terms, provided that Louis, when created a king by them, should not decline being guided by their counsels. With this understanding the duke did not refuse the oath of fidelity required from him.

---

longiore intervallo inter se distinguendis, quam ut mutuo conspectu notari possent, *Vita*, lingua patria vocant, legem tulit." TORFÆUS. *Hist. Norveg.*, lib. v. c. 10. vol. ii. pp. 222, 223.

* "——Odonem episcopum, post Canthorbricensium metropolitanum, * * * magnæ æquitatis ac eloquentiæ virum." RICHER. This is the celebrated St. Odo to whom further reference will be made in these pages.

The English ambassador brought back this answer to the king, who awaited his return.

King Athelstan felt secure in these promises, and he therefore directed that his nephew, and the most powerful persons in his kingdom, with all the ensigns of royal magnificence, should be embarked on board the ships. A prosperous gale filled the swelling sails, and the foaming oars which lashed the tranquil surface of the sea, soon sped the voyagers to land. No sooner had the barks been firmly attached to the beach, than Louis descended to the shore where he was received by the duke and his followers,* who at once bound themselves by oath to his majesty's service. The next thing done by the duke was to lead to the king a horse decorated with all the ensigns of royalty. When the king attempted to mount this animal, he at first found it impossible to do so, as the impatient and uneasy horse kept prancing about from one side to the other. Seeing this, the youthful Louis, disdaining the use of a stirrup, jumped with a single bound, and firmly seated himself upon the neighing steed. The feat was hailed with acclamation. It afforded gratification to those who witnessed it, and tended to excite admiration for the new sovereign.

The duke then, as his squire, preceded the king, bearing his majesty's arms, which he retained until ordered to give them to the leaders of the Gauls. Thus, with a large array of warriors, with all the pomp and pride of

---

* "Cui Guillelmus Dux Normanniæ, et Hugo Dux Burgundiæ, et Herbertus comes Viromadensis et multi alii obviam præcesserunt, seseque illi continuo submiserunt." *Chron. Turonens*, ad an. 936.

royalty, and with all that due reverence, that should be paid to a sovereign, Louis was conducted to Laon. There all the rights of sovereignty were received by him from fifteen of the great lords of the kingdom, and there with the good will and the approbation of all he was consecrated as king, by the lord archbishop Artaud, assisted with twenty other bishops.* From Laon he was conducted to the adjoining cities, and joyfully received wherever he appeared. The event was one which met with universal applause, and that diffused universal gladness, for with regard to it, the sentiment, the feeling, and the wishes of all were the same.†

---

* Louis was sixteen years of age, when he was consecrated at Laon on the 19th June, 936, by William archbishop of Sens. He was a second time consecrated at Rheims, by archbishop Artaud. GUADET, notes to Richer, vol. i. p. 129. (Soc. L'Hist. de France).

† RICHER, *Hist.*, lib. ii. c. 2, 3, 4. See ORDERICUS VITALIS, *Eccl. Hist.*, ad an. 936. RICHARD PICTAV. *Chron. Hist. Reg. Franc. Chron. Turonens.* ALBERIC. *Chron.* in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix. pp. 17, 23, 44, 52, 65. See also TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 193, 194, 195. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, pp. 113, 114. ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 261, § 2.

In this year, 936, Hakon was aided by Athelstan in the attempt to succeed his father Harald, as king of Norway; when the English king not only gave to his foster son all things necessary for his expedition, but also soldiers, and a well-equipped fleet. *Konung Hakon Adelstens Fostres Saga*, c. 1. SNORRO, vol. i. p. 126. Under the date of the same year, we find the following fact stated in the *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix. p. 90.

"Britones a transmarinis partibus Adelstani Regis Angliæ præsidio revertentes, terram suam repetunt." *Ex Chron. Kimperleg. apud Baluzium Tom.* 1. *Miscell. pag.* 520, *et ex Chron. Britan. in probat. novæ Hist. Britan. Tom.* 1, p. 4.

The return of the Bretons, under the auspices of Athelstan, took place in the year 937. The following extracts on this interesting point of history will, we are sure, be read with interest.

In the year 938,* Anlaf, the Pagan king of many Irish and other islanders, instigated by Constantine, his father-in-law, the king of Scotland, entered the mouth of the river Humber, with an immense fleet ;† consisting of not less than six hundred and fifteen ships.‡ Those who on this occasion conspired with this Anlaf, and Constantine king of the Scots, were Eugenius, king of the Cumbrians,

---

"Fugientes inde præ timore Normannorum territi comites ac Mathiberni, dispersi sunt per Franciam, Burgundiam et Aquitaniam. Fugit autem tunc temporis Mathvedoi comes de Poher ad regem Anglorum Adelstanum cum ingenti multitudine Britonum, ducens secum filium suum nomine Alanum, qui postea cognominatus est *Barbatorta*, quem ex filia Alani Magni genuerat, et quem ipse Rex Angliæ ex lavacro sancto susceperat; qui pro familiaritate et amicitia hujus regenerationis magnam fidem in eo habebat. Pauperes vero Britanni terram colentes, sub potestate Normannorum remanserant absque rectore et defensore." *Chron. Namnetens*, ad an. 912, 931.

"Iste vero Alanus cum rege Anglorum Adelstano ab infantia fuit nutritus, corpore validus et fortiter audax. Congregata navium parvitate, cum suis Britannis, qui ibidem adhuc superstites erant, venit per licentiam Regis revisere Britanniam." Ibid., ad an. 937. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. viii. p. 276.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. WIGORN, ad an. 937, p. 603. "Hiberniensium multarum insularum rex Paganus" are the words used by Florence of Worcester in describing Anlaf. Matthew of Westminster in copying Florence, describes Anlaf more accurately: "Hyberniensium, multarumque insularum rex," p. 186. In these harassing invasions of England made by the petty Danish vikings settled on the coast of Ireland, and their claims to a permanent possession and dominion in whatever country they obtained a settlement, may be traced those events which led to the assertion on the part of the royal descendants of those Northmen to a lordship over Ireland—"causa teterrimi belli."

‡ R. HOVEDEN, p. 422. *Chron. Mailros*, ad an. 937, p. 147. See S. DUNELM, *Hist.*, p. 155.

and a host equally numerous and barbarous, who were the followers of vikings and jarls.*

To repel this impious host, the king Athelstan collected an immense body of forces both by land and sea ;† and as he was marching through the province of Lindsey,‡ he met with a crowd of poor and humble persons. Upon asking them from what place they came, they answered, that they had been to visit the relics of St. John of Beverley, in the hope of being cured of various maladies with which they had been afflicted.

The king enquired if they had obtained what they had desired? "Yes," replied one, "I was born blind, and I "obtained the power of seeing, when near the body of that "most holy man ;" "and I," remarked another, "came "into this world a cripple, and you yourself can see, that "I walk perfectly well."

The truly Christian king hearing these statements, and others similar to them, exclaimed : "This John is indeed "truly great. I think it is but proper, considering the "terrible straight in which I am placed, that I should "obtain the favour, and implore the aid of so illustrious "a saint. As then I do not deem it to be proper to leave "unvisited so mighty a patron, I will command my army "to march forward along the great roads of the kingdom, "whilst I myself, accompanied by a few friends will visit "a shrine of which I hear so much, and invoke the "prayers and intercession of him whose relics rest there."

---

* INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 37. See FORDUN. *Hist. Scot.*, lib. iv. p. 672.

† ETHELRED. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.* p. 357.

‡ See BEDA, lib. ii. c. 16. G. MONUMET. lib. vi. c. 11, lib. ix. c. 3.

The truly illustrious king visited the tomb—there held the accustomed vigils, there said the usual prayers, and then, when he had bedewed the marble pavement of the chapel with his pious tears, he drew his knife* from its sheath, placed it on the holy altar, and thus expressed himself: "Behold! oh! most blessed John, the pledge "of my promise to thee. Should I happily, with thy "aid, return victorious from the war, in which I am now "about to engage, this pledge shall be redeemed by me "at a fitting price, and as long as I live, I shall be thy de-"vout and thankful disciple."

With these words the king repaired to his army (and we may here add), soon after carried the war of invasion into the lands of his enemies. Upon the night preceding the great battle with his enemies, and when the king lay oppressed with sleep, St. John of Beverley appeared to him, and assured him that in attacking the enemy, he might be certain of victory. "Thou hast," said the saint, "exhibited thy devotion at my tomb, and I have prayed "for thee to my God, and He hath heard my prayer. "Observe then thou my words, and attend to my advice. "Walk thou in the ways of thine ancestors, and I will be "the enemy of thy enemies, and afflict those, who seek to "heap sorrows on thy head. And now may the Grace of "God guide and protect thee!"

---

* The knife was formerly regarded as one of the arms of a soldier. See DUCANGE, in verb. *cultellus* and *cultellari*. See TORFÆUS, *Hist. Rer. Norveg.*, vol. ii. p. 476, where an account is given of a small knife being made a present to a Northern hero, and which being hung at his back, preserved him from assassination.

With these words the saint disappeared.*

It was whilst fighting against the Scotch, that Athelstan prayed of God, that through the intercession of St. John of Beverley, some plain, manifest, and undeniable sign might be granted, by which all men then living, as well as all to come after them might know, that the Scotch should, as of right, be subjected to the English. Uttering this invocation, the king struck with his sword a massive stone rock near the castle of Dunbar, and which until this day shews that there was a wide gash, even to the depth of an ell made in it by the sword of the sovereign.†

Upon his return to England, the king redeemed the knife which he had placed upon the altar of St. John of Beverley. He bestowed upon the church the immunity that it now enjoys, and for the honour and glory of God enriched it with many magnificent donations, and many costly gifts.‡

---

* Ethelred. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, pp. 357, 358.

† Bromton, p. 838. Higden, *Polychron*, lib. vi. p. 262. *Mirac. S. Joan. Beverlacen*, c. i. § 2, 5. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai), vol. ii. pp. 180, 181.

In the letter of king Edward I. to Pope Boniface, (a copy of which is given by Knyghton), this extraordinary circumstance is referred to as a positive fact, and not only is the appearance of the shattered rock at Dunbar relied upon; but this corroborative circumstance is cited in proof of its undeniable truth: "et hujusmodi signum hactenus evidens in Legenda, et in Beverlacensi ecclesia singulis ebdomadis per annum ad laudem ipsius miraculose recitatur." *De Event. Ang.*, lib. iii. p. 2485. It may also be observed that the two handed sword given by king Athelstan to Hakon was called "the Quernbiter," because it "had cut down a mill-stone to the centre eye." See *Konung Harald Harfager's Saga*, c. 43, *Konung Hakon Adalsten's Fostres Saga*, c. 28, 31. In the last chapter it is said, that Hakon with his "Kuernbitur," split his opponent through his helmet, head, and down to his shoulders! —Snorro, vol. i. pp. 122, 157, 160.

‡ Ingulph. *Hist.* p. 29. *Mirac. S. Joan. Beverlacen.*, c. i. § 6.

The last battle in which king Athelstan was engaged was that which he fought with Anlaf, the son of Sithric, and who, in alliance with the rebellious Scotch king Constantine, had passed the boundaries of England in the hope of effecting a successful invasion of the kingdom.* This

---

Act. Sanct. (Mai), vol. ii. p. 281. We make no apology for introducing these statements respecting a saint, of whom this additional fact is to be mentioned :

"King Henry V. attributed to the intercession of this saint the glorious victory of Agincourt, on which occasion a synod, in 1416, ordered his festival to be solemnly kept over all England." BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v, p. 588. See *Britannia Sancta*, vol. i. pp. 278, 282; BEDA *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. v. c. ii, vi, and for an account of the life and the multitude of miracles effected through the intercession of this saint, the *Acta Sanctorum*, (Mai), vol. ii. pp. 166, 194. As to the Frid-stal, or stone-seat of sanctuary, which was placed on the right side of the altar in the church of St. John of Beverley, and the oath taken by those who claimed sanctuary, see DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. p. 128, and vol. vi. p. 1307.

The reader will find that in another point of view, the transactions referred to in the text are deserving of a place in English history. Herr Lappenberg in commenting upon the constitutions of the Gild of London, passed in the reign of Athelstan (one of which enforced the recital of psalms for the repose of the soul of each deceased member), observes :—

"But of predominant interest this document," (the statutes of the Gild of London) "would appear, if it should be considered as tending to shew the relative position of the commonalty, and their representation in the assembly of the noble and free, an hypothesis which involves no inconsistency with other accounts to be noticed, when treating on the oldest provincial constitutions, but, on the contrary, serves not indeed to establish, but to illustrate the well-known tradition, according to which *the English towns founded the right of sending deputies to the lower house on charters of king Æthelstan, especially on one to the town of Beverley, after the battle of Brunenburh.*" LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 119, 120.

* W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131, vol. i p. 206.

immense army of Pagans had been mustered in the hope that they might subject the English people to their profane ordinances, and at the same time annihilate the observance, and the due regard to those truly Christian laws by which the people of this country had been governed.*

Athelstan, in order that he might the better secure a certain and glorious victory over his boastful and confident foe, purposely retreated before him, permitted his youthful, ferocious and wickedly ambitious opponent to advance a considerable distance into England, until at length, he determined to meet, and check his career at Brunenburgh,† where he arrayed before the invaders an army led by accomplished generals, and its ranks filled by truly valiant soldiers.

Anlaf did not perceive how terrible, and how great was the danger to which he was exposing himself, until it was imminent and unavoidable.‡ Although he had under his command, an immense body of Danes, Norwegians, Scotchmen, and Picts, still whether from a distrust of his chances of success, or, from a natural preference for that

---

* *Vit. S. Odo*, c. i. § 14. *Act. Sanct.*, (Julii) vol. ii. p. 69.

† "It is singular that the position of this famous battle is not ascertained. The Saxon song says it was at *Brunanburh;* Ethelwerd, a contemporary, names the place *Brunandune;* Simeon of Durham, *Weondone*, or *Ethronnanwerch*, or *Brunnan byrge*, Malmsbury, *Brunsford;* Ingulf says *Brunford* in Northumbria. These, of course, imply the same place: but where was it? Camden thought it was at Ford, near Bromeridge, in Northumberland. Gibson mentions, that in Cheshire there is a place called Brunburh. I observe that the Villare mentions a Brunton in Northumberland." TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 185, note 36.

‡ W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131, vol. i, p. 207.

cunning, and treachery, which are characteristic of his nation, he resolved upon making an insidious night attack upon his enemy, rather than encounter their strength, and cope with their skill in the fair and open field of battle.* He resolved then not only to descend to the arts, but to take upon himself the office of a spy; and with this view he laid aside the insignia of royalty, bore in his hands a harp, and made his way to the tent of the English king.† As soon as he stood before the doors of the tent, he commenced singing, and as his words were occasionally heard mingling with the chimes of the sounding strings, he easily obtained an entrance, especially as he declared himself to be a minstrel who gained his daily subsistence by practising this art. He amused the king and his guests, for some time, by his musical accomplishments; but whilst he sung for them, his eyes were busily engaged in examining every thing around him. At last the feast was over—all inclination for amusement fled with the repast; and as the serious thoughts of war were about to occupy the conversation of those who were the leaders, he was ordered to take with him the price allotted for his minstrelsy and depart.

Anlaf loathed the hireling's pay bestowed upon him, and buried it in the earth beneath the spot on which he stood.

This circumstance was noticed by an individual who had formerly fought under the command of Anlaf, and it was immediately reported by him to Athelstan. Athelstan

---

* Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 37.

† W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 131, vol. i. p. 207.

found fault with the informant, that he did not on the instant discover to him his enemy, when that enemy was placed before his eyes.

To such a reproach the man gave this answer: "The "same oath of fidelity, which I have lately given to your "majesty, I formerly gave to Anlaf; and if you now saw "me violate it as regards him, you should justly be sus-"picious, that the same might befal yourself. If your "majesty will deign to attend to the advice of your faith-"ful servant, you will remove your tent from this spot; "and in another position await the reinforcements which "are hastening forwards. A short delay will enable you "to break down the strength and punish the temerity of "an insolent foe."

The suggestion was approved of, and the king at once removed his tent from the place where it had been first pitched.

Anlaf, who had made due preparations for his night attack, came to the spot where the king's tent had stood, and which he found occupied by a certain bishop, who had arrived but the evening before, and who, being ignorant of what had occurred, had, on account of its smooth and level surface, selected it for his encampment. Anlaf here slew the bishop and all his followers.*

The shrieks and groans of the dying could be heard afar off.† They reached the ears of the king, who lay about a

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 131, vol. i. pp. 207, 208. The name of the prelate thus slain was Werstan. He was bishop of Sherborne. This is stated by Malmsbury in his *Gesta Pontificum*, who adds, "Anlafus qui pridie locum exploraverat, noctu paratus adveniens, quod reperit, incunctanter delevit." Lib. ii. p. 248.

† Ingulphus, *Hist.* p. 37.

mile distant from the place of slaughter. Ever watchful and vigilant, he had his soldiers, who reposed in the open air or in tents around him, awakened from their slumbers. By his directions, they were armed with speed, and as the day dawned, they marched for the spot in which their countrymen had been slain, prepared and eager to attack the barbarous foes, who had been toiling in the work of death during the night, and who were now about to encounter them with wearied bodies and disordered ranks.

It so happened, that Athelstan, who commanded all the West Saxons, should array his soldiers against those of Anlaf, and that Turketul his chancellor, who was placed at the head of the Londoners and the Mercians, should encounter the ranks of Constantine. Between the armies the discharge of iron missiles was speedily abandoned; and warriors met foot to foot—shield clashed with shield, as boss was pressed against boss. Numbers fell to the earth, mortally wounded, and the blood of kings was mingled with that of plebeians.*

At the very moment that dire slaughter was devastating the ranks of both armies, a most lamentable circumstance occurred.† The king, Athelstan, was fighting hand to hand against the enemy, when the sword he grasped was broken off at the hilt, and thus left him—the sovereign—exposed and unarmed to the attacks of his foes. Meanwhile Odo, who stood at a short distance from the field of battle, was engaged, heart, soul, and lips, in praying to Christ, for the safety and salvation of the Christian army. His hands, his eyes, and his thoughts, were all uplifted to heaven, and all untiringly fixed upon this one object.

* Ingulphus, *Hist.* p. 37.

† *Vit. S. Odo*, c. i. § 15. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. ii. p. 69.

The king stood at this time in a situation of terrible peril; and he knew not, in his difficulty, what he could possibly do. As to snatching the sword of another—to take from another his arms—to leave another, and that one of his own subjects, defenceless, in order that he might defend himself—it would be a base deed, and therefore not even to be thought of for a moment.

A portion of the hostile army immediately opposed to the king, and who were on the point of retreating, upon perceiving that Athelstan stood before them with a broken sword, and therefore defenceless, renewed the fight with greater vigour, and pushed onward against him. Then was the air filled with a loud roar of voices, which came like a thunder-peal from the multitude, as they prayed to God to have mercy on their king. The venerable Odo, on the instant, hurried up to the retreating soldiers, and thus addressed his sovereign, who he saw was about to be abandoned: "What is this," said he, "that I hear? Or what "means the lamentation that is made? Your good sword "hangs by your side—it is stout, whole, and strong, and "yet you complain that it has been shattered to pieces! "Resume your wonted courage. Place your hand upon "the scabbard. Draw forth your sword, and the right "hand of God will aid you. Fear not. Sunset will not "fall upon the earth, until those enemies of your God who "have risen up against you shall have disappeared. Death "or flight await them."

Great was the stupor and amazement of those who heard these words, which they found confirmed when they directed their eyes to the king, and saw a sword hanging by his side. The king felt greatly comforted with the aid that Heaven had sent him, and drawing out the sword, he

dealt such blows with it, both to the right and left, that he disabled, or put to flight, or killed dead on the spot, all who encountered him.*

Dreadful, indeed, was that battle, and hard was it contested on both sides.† Already had it raged for a long time, and neither seemed disposed to abandon the field as a vanquished foe, when the chancellor Turketul marshalled under his especial orders a few of the Londoners, whom he knew to be the very bravest of his troops, and whose captain was a certain man of the Wiccians, whose name

---

* Vit. S. Odo, c. i. § 15, 16, 17. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. ii. p. 69. *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. pp. 80, 81, &c. "Precibus sancti Odonis Dorobernensis archiepiscopi gladius de cœlo in vacuam regis tunc vaginam divinitus est illapsus." BROMTON, p. 839, see p. 863.

The story of the miraculous sword is told in a different manner by William of Malmsbury. He mentions that Athelstan, notwithstanding the warning given by his faithful servant, was surprised by a night attack led by Anlaf on his encampment; that in the confusion that ensued, his sword accidentally fell from the sheath (gladius ejus fortuitu vagina excidit;) that on this he invoked the aid of God and St. Aldhelm, and then, laying his hand upon his scabbard, he found a sword, which in his day, (hodie) and in honour of this miracle, was preserved in the king's treasury." W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § 131. See also *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. i. p. 200. "It appears," says Mr. Hardy, the learned editor for the English Historical Society of Malmsbury, "by the Patent Roll, 9th of John, that the king had among his regalia two swords, viz. *ensis Tristani et alius ensis:* it is not improbable the sword which was preserved in the king's treasury when Malmsbury wrote, may have been the *alius ensis* referred to in the letters patent above cited." Vol. i. p. 208, note 6. Rossius also refers to this miracle, which he confirms by the statement of a curious fact, and one that must be much prized by antiquarians: "Huic regi in quodam bello gladio privatus est, sed intente orans habuit divinitus gladium in vaginam missum, et *extunc usque ad conquestum* gladii pugnantium cassidi semper erat cathena subtili ligatum." *Hist. Reg. Ang.* fol. 94, a. p. 98. See R. HIGDEN, *Polychron.* lib. vi. pp. 262, 263.

† INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 37.

was Singin, a man of whom it may be remarked, that he had long before rendered himself conspicuous by his martial achievements, for not only did he surpass all his associates in height, in bodily size, and muscular strength; but he was regarded even amongst the heroes of London, as the stoutest, fiercest, and bravest of them all—as the first to attack the foe—as the most dauntless in dispersing the enemy's array, and in striking down all who ventured to oppose him.

Turketul with this chosen band, scattered the thick pressed ranks of the Orknies' men, and of the Picts; and in doing so his trusty hauberk was seen to bear a very forest of darts and lances which adhered to, but could not penetrate it. Forward still he moved, and again his chosen band broke through and shattered the wedge-like batallions of the Cumbrians and the Scotch. At length he struggled onward amid thick-shed blood until he reached the Scotch king himself, whom he struck from his horse, and then, whilst lying on the earth, he used his utmost exertions to capture the monarch alive. The Scotch, on the other hand, circled closely around their king—and put forth all their strength to save him. They were many against a few, and by these many, an attack was made upon Turketul, in particular. Often and often was he afterwards heard to declare, that so extreme was his peril, that for the moment he regretted his own rashness. He was on the very point of being overwhelmed by the Scotch, and the latter were at the same time almost secure of being able to rescue their king, when Singin stabbed the monarch with his sword.* This was a battle, which even

* Ingulphus. *Hist.*, p. 37. We omit the lines that follow,

to this day is justly called "the great battle."* It is one, which the Anglo Saxon writers describe not as if writing mere prose, but pourtray with all the far-fetched phrases and metaphors of poetry, and a literal translation, word for word, will demonstrate not merely the genius of the people themselves, but also how well their language coincided with the gravity of the deeds they desired to depict.†

"Nine hundred and thirty eight.‡ Here Athelstan king
Of earls the lord, the rewarder of heroes,
And his brother eke, Edmund Atheling
Elder of ancient race, slew in the fight
With the edge of their swords, the foe at Brumby.

---

because they describe king Constantine being killed in battle. A mistake which is also made by William of Malmsbury (*Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 131, vol. i, p. 209. See note 8 by Mr. Hardy, vol. 1, p. 208. E.H.S.) A son of Constantine having been wounded in the battle. and probably in the manner described by Ingulphus, may have led to the mistake. As to Constantine, he reigned for four years after this battle, then voluntarily abdicated the crown, took the monastic vows—and from a monk became an abbot, an office that he administered for five years, until his death. His body was afterwards removed, and buried in the church of St. Oran. FORDUN., *Hist. Scot.*, lib. iv. c. 23, p. 672. See also *Act. Sanct.* (Mart.) vol. i. p. 473. S. CADROE. *Comment. Præv.*, § 20, *Vit.* c. 2, p. 476, § 15, p. 477, note 3.

* "Unde et vulgo usque ad præsens bellum prænominatur magnum." ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 5, p. 848.

† "De cujus prœlii magnitudine Anglici scriptores quasi carminis modo proloquentes, et extraneis tam verbis quam figuris usi, translatione fida donandi sunt, ut pene de verbo in verbum eorum interpretantes eloquium, ex gravitate verborum gravitatem acutum, et animorum gentis illius condiscamus. H. HUNT, lib. v. p. 354. We quote these words as our apology for inserting in the text, the long extract from the *Saxon Chronicle*, which states even amid its poetical figures so many positive facts respecting the great battle of Brunanburgh.

‡ *Sax. Chronicle*, translated by the Rev. J. INGRAM, p. 141.

The sons of Edward, their board-walls clove
And hewed their banners, with the wrecks of their hammers.
So were they taught, by kindred zeal,
That they at camp oft 'gainst any robber
Their land should defend, their hoards and their homes.
Pursuing fell the clans of the Scots;
The men of the fleet in numbers fell.
Amidst the din of the field, the warrior perspired.
Since the sun was up in the morning tide
(The gigantic light! shining gladness o'er the earth,
The candle bright of God, of the everlasting Lord)
Till it, the noble creature, sat in the western main;
There lay many of the northern heroes
Under a shower of arrows; shot over shields;
And Scotland's boast, a Scythian race,
The mighty children of war.
With chosen troops, throughout the day
The fierce West Saxons pressed on the loathed bands;
Hewed down the fugitives, and the rear scattered
With strong mill-sharpened blades.
The Mercians too, the hard hand-play
Spared not to any of those that with Anlaf
Over the briny deep, in the ship's bosom,
Sought this land, for the hardy fight.
Five kings lay on the field of battle,
In the bloom of youth, and pierced with swords.
So seven eke of the jarls of Anlaf;
And of the ships' crew unnumbered crowds.
There was dispersed the little band
Of hardy Scots, the dread of Northern hordes;
Urged to the noisy deep of unrelenting Fate.
The king of the fleet with his slender craft
Escaped with his life, on the felon flood;—
And so too Constantine, the valiant chief,

Returned to the North in hasty flight.
The hoary Hildrinc cared not to boast
Among his kindred.
Here was his remnant of relations and friends
Slain with the sword in the crowded flight.
His son too he left on the field of battle
Mangled with wounds,
Young at the fight.
The fair-haired youth had no reason to boast
Of the slaughtering strife.
Nor old Inwood, nor Anlaf the more
With the wrecks of their army could laugh and say
That they on the field of stern command
Better workmen were,
In the conflict of banners, the clash of spears
The meeting of heroes, the rustling of weapons,
Which they on the field of slaughter played
With the sons of Edward.
The Northmen sailed in their nailed ships
A dreary remnant on the roaring sea;
Over deep water, Dublin they sought
And Ireland's shores
In great disgrace.
Such then the brothers both together,
King and Atheling, sought their country
West Saxon land,
In fight triumphant.
They left behind them raw to devour,
The sallow kite, the swarthy raven
With horny nib, and the hoarse vulture,
With the eagle swift, to consume his prey;
The greedy-goshawk, and that grey beast
The wolf of the weald.
No slaughter yet was greater made

E'er in this island, of people slain
Before this same with the edge of the sword;
As the books inform us, of the old historians,
Since hither came from the Eastern shores
The Angles and Saxons over the broad sea,
And Britain sought—
Fierce battle-smiths, who the Welsh overcame,
Most valiant earls,
And gained the land.*

There fell in that field of battle five vikings, twelve jarls, and nearly the entire of the main force of the barbarians: the remaining few, whose lives were spared, were saved from the general slaughter, in order that they might be baptized and become Christians.†

Thus was this war happily terminated, and there was

* *Sax. Chron.* translated by the Rev. J. INGRAM, pp. 141, 145. The translation of Mr. Ingram is adopted nearly word for word; but the precedent given by Henry of Huntingdon is followed, by placing the translation in such a form, as may give the reader a more correct notion of the poetical spirit of the original, than could be conveyed by a rigid adherence to the mechanical construction of the lines.

† W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 131, vol. i. p. 203, As to this invasion by Northmen, and Scotch, see lib. ii. § 135, vol. i. p. 218. F. WIGORN, p. 603. ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 5, p. 848. H. HUNT., pp. 354, 355. M. WEST., p. 180. ROGER DE WEND. vol. i. p. 392. *Chron. Mailros.* p. 147. HIGDEN, *Polychron*, pp. 262, 263. R. HOVEDEN, p. 422. S. DUNELM, *Hist. Eccles.* lib. ii. c. 18, pp. 25, 26. *Hist. Reg. Ang.* pp. 134, 135. BROMTON, p. 839. FORDUN, *Hist. Scot.* lib. iv. c. 21, 22, 23, pp. 671, 672, 673. BUCHANAN *Hist. Rer. Scot.* lib. vi. § 15, 16, 17, pp. 139, 140. (Aberdeen ed. 1762,) CHALMER'S *Caledonia*, vol. i. pp. 387, 388, 389. TORFÆUS' *Hist. Rer. Norveg.* lib. ii. c. 3, 4, 5, vol. ii. pp. 157, 166. TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 181, 188. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. pp. 114, 117.

consequently none thenceforward who would presume to incur the displeasure, or provoke the wrath of king Athelstan.* He had triumphed over all his foes; he had bestowed his sisters in marriage upon princes of illustrious rank; and the next thing that formed the sole occupation of his mind, and in which he was ever aided by the suggestions and advice of his chancellor, Turketul, was the exaltation, in all parts of the kingdom, of the church of Christ.† He restored monasteries, he built churches, he enriched the holy altars with most precious ornaments; but beyond all the rest he was most bountiful to Malmsbury, where he had interred, with the most solemn pomp, his cousins Elwin and Ethelwin, the two sons of his uncle Ethelwerd, who had been slain at the battle of Brunenburgh.‡ This monastery he, for their sake, regarded with an especial love, exalted, honoured, and endowed it beyond all other monasteries, and there too, when fate had determined the period of his existence, his remains were consigned to the earth.§

---

* Ingulphus, *Hist.* p. 29.

† Ibid. p. 38.

‡ They were buried to the right and left of the altar in the church of St. Mary. W. Malmsb., *De Pontif.* lib. v. p. 362. See *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib ii. § 135, vol. i. p. 218.

§ Ingulphus, *Hist.* p. 38. See W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 140, vol. i. p. 225. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 255. As to the charities of Athelstan, see Bromton, p. 841; and his gifts to the shrine and church of St. Cuthbert, S. Dunelm, pp. 25, 75, 134; his donations and privileges bestowed on the shrine and church of St. John of Beverley, *Chron. Petribergens.* ad an. 938; his building of monasteries, Rog. de Wend. vol. i. pp. 392, 393, Bromton, p. 838; his bestowal of lands on the see of York, "in perpetuam elemosinam." *Act. Pont. Ebor.* pp. 1698, 1699; his

In the year 941,* Athelstan's earthly career terminated, but too soon, at Gloucester. His glorious remains were borne to Malmsbury, and there buried beneath the altar. Before his body, when it was brought in funereal procession, there were carried in gold, and in silver, the numerous donations made by him, as well as the relics of saints procured by him, at great cost, in Britanny, beyond the seas.† It was on such pious objects he expended those treasures which his father had collected, and that he himself had long permitted to remain untouched; and it is even said, that he had been warned in a dream so to apply the long accumulated wealth. He was a man, of whom it might be said, that, if we regard the number of his years, had lived but for a short time; but if we consider how great was his glory, we must admit that his life was a long one.‡

[Of the many laws passed by Athelstan, those which

---

restoration to St. Augustine's of Canterbury of lands that had been unjustly taken from it, THORN, *Chron.* p. 1778; his donation of Folkestone to the see of Canterbury, *Evidens. Ecc. Cantuar.* p. 2220; and his generosity to the church of St. Paul's in London, ROSSIUS, p. 97.

* *Sax. Chron.*

† "Simul et sanctorum reliquiæ de transmarina Britannia emptæ." W. MALMSB. See Vit. S. Aldhelm, *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. pp. 30, 31, 32.

‡ W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 140, vol. i. p. 225. He died without children, BROMTON, p. 839. He was first called king of all Britain. S. DUNELM, *Hist. Eccles.* lib. ii. c. 17, p. 24; see on this point, TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 189, 190, notes 48, 49. ROGER DE WENDOVER, vol. i. p. 393, note 2. H. HUNT. p. 355. HIGDEN, *Polychron.* p. 263.

particularly affected the church and the poor were the following.]

§ 1. "I, Athelstan, king, with the counsel of Wulfhelm, archbishop, and of my other bishops, make known to the reeves at each 'burh,' and beseech you in God's name, and by all his saints, and also by my friendship, that ye first of my own goods render the tithes, both of live stock and of the year's earthly fruits, so as they may most rightly be either meted, or told, or weighed out; and let the bishops then do the like from their own goods, and my ealdormen, and my reeves the same. And I will, that the bishop and the reeves command it to all those who ought to obey them, and that it be done at the right term. * * * And I will also that my reeves so do, that there be given the church-scotts and the *soul-scotts* at the places to which they rightly belong; and plough-alms yearly, on this condition; that they shall enjoy it at the holy places who are willing to serve their churches, and of God and of me are willing to deserve it; but let him who will not, forfeit the bounty, or again turn to right."*

§ 4. "The lord who is privy to his theow's (slave's) theft, and it is manifest against him, let him forfeit the 'theow,' and be liable in his 'wer' for the first time.†

§ 8. "And we have ordained: if any landless man should become a follower in another shire, and again seek his kinsfolk, that he (any person) may harbour him on this condition, that he (such person) present him to folk-right, if he there do any wrong, or make 'bot' for him.‡

---

* THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, pp. 83, 84.

† Ibid. p. 86.

‡ Ibid. p. 87.

§ 19. "And we have ordained respecting 'a theowman' if he were guilty at the ordeal, that the 'ceap-gild' (the value of the thing stolen) be paid; and that he be scourged thrice, or a second 'gild' be given, and be the 'wite' of half the value of 'theows.'*

§ 22. "And let no man receive another man's man without his leave whom he before followed. If any one do so, let him give up the man, and make 'bot' the king's 'oferhyrnes' (the penalty for contempt). And let no one dismiss his accused man from him before he has done what is right.†

§ 23. "If any one gives 'wed' (security) for an ordeal,‡

---

* THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 89.

† Ibid., p. 90. See c. iv. § i, where it is declared "he who is innocent may follow such lord as he will." p. 94.

‡ A more accurate idea of the manner in which the ordeal was enforced may be gleaned from the following doom of Athelstan, c. iv. § 7.

"And concerning the ordeal we enjoin by command of God and of the archbishop, and of all the bishops: that no man come within the church after the fire is borne in with which the ordeal shall be heated, except the mass-priest, and him who shall go thereto; and let there be measured nine feet from the stake to the mark, by the man's feet who goes thereto. But if it be water, let it be heated, till it low to boiling. And be the kettle of iron, or of brass, of lead, or of clay. And if it be a single accusation, let the hand dive after the stone up to the wrist; and, if it be threefold, up to the elbow. And when the ordeal is ready, then let two men go in of either side; and be they agreed that it is so hot, as we before have said. And let go in an equal number of men of either side, and stand on both sides of the ordeal, along the church; and let these all be fasting; and let the mass-priest sprinkle holy water over them all; and let each of them taste of the holy water, and give them all the book and the image of Christ's rood to kiss: and let no man mend the fire any longer when the hallowing is begun; but let the iron lie upon the hot embers till the last col-

then let him come three days before to the mass-priest, who is to hallow it, and let him feed himself with bread, and with water, and salt, and herbs, before he shall go to it;

---

lect" (of the mass): after that let it be laid on the stake; and let there be no other speaking within, except that they earnestly pray to Almighty God that he make manifest what is soothest, and let him go thereto; and let his hand be enveloped, and be it postponed till after the third day, whether it be foul or clean within the envelope. And he who shall break this law, be the ordeal with respect to him void, and let him pay to the king cxx shillings as 'wite.' THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 96.

The ordeals were of four kinds, by cornsed, a cake of barley bread; by cold water; by hot water, and by hot iron. "In the middle of the ninth century, the lawfulness of the practice had been disputed by Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, and defended by Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims. Soon afterwards *it was condemned as superstitious by Pope Stephen V.*, and later by his successors Alexander II., Célestine III., Innocent III., and Honorius III.: yet so powerful was the force of ancient custom, and so great the difficulty of finding a substitute in cases of circumstantial evidence, that it kept its ground in England till the reign of Henry III., whose guardian, Gualo, was the legate of Honorius. It was probably through his influence that the council determined to enforce the prohibition of the holy see." LINGARD'S *Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 138, see also pp. 130, 137. DUCANGE, in verb. *ordela, ordalium.* THORPE'S *Glossary to Ancient Laws and Institutes.* The trial by ordeal in MALLET'S *Northern Antiquities*, (Edited by J. A. Blackwell) is not merely traced to the northern nations, but is shewn to have existed amongst the Greeks and Romans, p. 134, note (†). St. Gregory of Tours describes the ordeal by cold water, in his work *De Gloria Martyrum*, lib. i. c. 69; the ordeal of hot water, Ibid., lib. i. c. 81; and of fire in *De Gloria Confessorum*, c. 14. See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. iv. pp. 595, 596. See also TWYSDEN, *Decem Scriptores*, Glossarium, in verb. *ordalium.* GRIMM *Deutsche Rechts Alterthumer*, pp. 908—937. OZANAM, *Des Germains avant le Christianisme*, pp. 120—123. SCHMIDT *Geschichte der Deutschen*, vol. ii. pp. 128, 129, 130. In this last authority it is shewn that in cases of theft the person accused was not permitted to expurgate himself by oath, but should submit either to the ordeal, or a single combat, and the latter was generally preferred by freemen or persons of higher rank.

and let him attend mass each of the three days, and make an oblation, and go to housel* on the day that he shall go to the ordeal; and then swear the oath that he is, according to folk-right, guiltless of the charge before he goes to the ordeal. And if it be water, that he dive an ell and a half by the rope; if it be iron ordeal, let it be three days before the hand be undone. And let every man begin his charge with a fore-oath, as we before ordained; and be each of these fasting, on either hand, who may be there together, by God's command and the archbishop, and let there not be on either side more men than xii. If the accused man be with a larger company than some twelve, then be the ordeal void unless they will go from him.†

§ 25. "And he who shall swear a false oath, and it be made clear against him; that he never after be oath worthy, nor let him lie within a hallowed burial-place, though

---

* "Housel implies a victim of sacrifice." LINGARD'S *Antiquities of Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 325. See note same page, where is demonstrated the ancient belief of the people of this country in the most blessed sacrament of the altar. In vol. ii. p. 133, Dr. Lingard gives the very words in which the mass-priest administered the housel-communion—to the person about to undergo the ordeal:—

"*May this body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ*, prove thee innocent or guilty this day. Corpus hoc et sanguis Domini nostri Jhesu Christi sit vobis (vel tibi) ad probationem hodie." (Miss. Judic. apud Spelm. voce Ordal.)

In the life of St. Gengulphus (circa 760), will be found a most interesting account of a person convicted of impurity by the water ordeal. *Vit.* c. 2. § 8, 9. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai), vol. ii. pp. 646, 647. and the innocence of another, circa, 1175, testified by the fire ordeal. *Vit. S. Petri. Arch. Jarens, App.*, § 15, 18, pp. 338, 339, same volume.

† THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 90.

he die, unless he have the testimony of the bishop in whose shrift-shire he may be, that he has made such 'bot' as his confessor prescribed to him.*

C. iv. § 4. "And we ordained at Thunresfeld in the 'gemot:' if any thief or robber should flee to the king, or to any church; and to the bishop, that he have a term of nine days. And if he flee to an ealdorman or an abbot, or a thane, let him have a term of three days."†

---

* THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 90. That is, the sinner was compelled to make, according to his means, the most full compensation, and complete restitution to those whom he had wronged by his perjury. Such is still, and ever was the rule of the church, and such alone the conditions on which absolution ever was, or ever will be granted.

† Ibid., pp. 94, 95. The privilege here conceded afforded time to the culprit to prove his innocence, if wrongfully accused, or to compensate, if it were in his power, for the crime he had committed. When the time had expired, he should suffer the penalty awarded by the law. As to the king's peace, which by the first portion of the above clause he was permitted to enjoy, its extent is thus specified by the law of Athelstan.

"Thus far shall be the king's 'grith,' from his 'burh'-gate, where he is dwelling, on its four sides; that is, iii miles, and iii furlongs, and iii acres breadth, and ix feet, and ix palms, and ix barleycorns." c. iv. § 5, THORPE, p. 95.

As to the laws of Athelstan, see BROMTON, pp. 845, 848, 852, PHILLIP'S *Angelsachsischen Rechts*, § xx, 223, pp. 65, 66.

CHAPTER VI.

EDMUND I.

EDMUND consecrated as king by Odo, archbishop of Canterbury. Dunstan appointed one of the king's councillors.. incurs the displeasure of the sovereign, but recovers it by a marvellous event, and is made abbot of Glastonbury. Privileges bestowed upon Glastonbury. Decay of Croyland. Invasion of England by Anlaf of Ireland.. battles and treaty between Anlaf and Edmund. Treason of an archbishop. Two Danish kings baptized. Awful death of Anlaf. Birth of Edgar the Pacific. Edmund visits the shrine of St. Cuthbert. Relics of St. Wilfrid removed from Ripon to Canterbury. An avaricious bishop punished. An invasion of France threatened by Edmund.. the manner in which the threat was responded to by Hugh the Great. The assassination of King Edmund accounted for. The laws of king Edmund.

CHAPTER VI.

EDMUND I.

A.D. 941—946.

In the year 941, the atheling Edmund took upon himself the government of this kingdom.* Edmund was the brother of Athelstan ;† and he was consecrated as king of the English, at Kingstown, by Odo, the archbishop of Canterbury.‡ Edmund was at that time in his eighteenth year.§

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 141.

‡ R. Dicet. *Abb. Chron.* p. 454. This author, as well as F. Wigorn, R. de Wendover, Chron. Petriberg, and others, place the accession of Edmund in the year 940. Mr. Hardy, the editor of William of Malmsbury, remarks, "there is a charter of Eadmund dated A.D. 940, indict. xiii. MSS. Cott. Ang. ii. 62." Vol. i. p. 225, note 7. Compare this note with Mr. Coxe's, Rog. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 393, note 2, (E.H.S.)

§ *Sax. Chron.* It is stated by R. Higden, that Edmund was in his twentieth year when he came to the throne, and he intimates that he was the same year married to St. Edgiva. *Polychron,* ad an. 941, p. 263.

No sooner had Edmund succeeded to the throne of his deceased brother, than he directed that Dunstan, whose sublime virtues, whose great learning, and whose remarkable eloquence were well known to him, should be enrolled amongst the royal councillors, and as one of the nobles of his palace.* Dunstan did not presume to resist these commands of his sovereign; for he was ever mindful of the precepts of our Lord, of Him who is the King of Kings, viz. that he should ever be prepared to render that obedience which was due to his earthly lord, as well as to give unto God that devotion which belongs to God. * * * Long as it was his destiny to pass his life in courts, these were the two guiding reins by which his course was conducted.† They were to him the law as a citizen, the commandments as a Christian, and both incessantly adhered to in the practical business of life.

Some of the knights of the court, observing how persevering and how constant was Dunstan in this course of conduct, felt animated towards him with a true spirit of charity; with a love so strong that it might truly be designated as fraternal. There were, however, on the other hand —many indeed, it may well be said, too many, whose minds were darkened, and who conceived for him the bitter hatred of mortified vanity, who envied his prosperity, and who therefore felt for him a mortal enmity. These persons execrated him, and in pursuance of their malicious designs against him, sought for and practised every means by

---

* Bridferth, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 3, § 13. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 350, 351.

† "Binas habenas sacro moderamine tenens."

which they might persecute this trust-worthy servant of God. They twined around him a snare of iniquity, (one which was to be more fatal to themselves than it ever could be to him) but, at length, their indefatigable exertions to calumniate him were so far successful, that the king gave ear to their false reports; and these reports angered him so much, that he ordered Dunstan to be denuded of the dignity conferred upon him, deprived of all the honours that had been bestowed upon him, and, as a solitary man, abandoned to fortune, to take up his abode wheresoever he pleased.

At the time that these circumstances occurred, there were at Windsor,* and then on a visit with the king, some venerable persons, who were members of an embassy from the East Saxon kingdom; and Dunstan, considering that he was destined to banishment, and ignorant what better course to adopt, besought of them that they would not leave him without protection, because he had lost the favour of his sovereign, but bring him with them, even though it should be to dwell for ever in their province. They felt compassion for his sorrow, and promised, if he should accompany them, that whatever could be done to promote his happiness in their country should be performed for him.

Upon the succeeding day, the king, accompanied by his regular retinue, went to enjoy his usual amusement of the chace. Upon reaching the forest, each person proceeded

* See note *f.* by Bærtius, *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 352. We should infer from Butler that these events occurred at the palace of Chedder, which "was but nine miles from Glastonbury." *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v. p. 647, (St. Dunstan.)

in pursuit of game through various thickly shaded paths. Soon the loud blasts of the hunting horns, and the deep baying of the dogs, roused a herd of deer, which instantly started off from their pursuers. One of these was marked out by the king, and he set forward alone, with his dogs, with the determination of running it down.

The affrighted stag, in its fleet and devious flight, wearied out the strength of the king's horse, and baffled the fleetness of his dogs, until at length it reached a place, which is in the proximity of Windsor, and where there is a precipice, such as may be found in a mountainous country, dark, deep, and profound, and to this precipice (we know not why nor wherefore, unless that it was in accordance with the unsearchable will of God) the hunted stag ran, bounded into the yawning abyss, was instantly followed by the eager hounds, and all alike were smashed to atoms!

Towards the same precipice the king, following the stag and dogs, came dashing onwards with furious speed; but as soon as he could perceive what a tremendous gulf he was about to be hurried into, he tried with all his strength to rein in his steed. He felt the effort to be vain, for, hard-necked and obstinate, it still kept plunging forward with eager haste, and unabated speed.

Human struggles could do no more. Life, and the hope of life, were alike lost to him! He commended his soul into the hands of his God; and this mental prayer passed through his thoughts:—

"I give Thee thanks, O most high and mighty God, "that I cannot remember that I have ever in all my life "done injury to any human being but Dunstan alone, and

" should life be now spared to me, I will most promptly " amend it, and make compensation for it."

At these words, and through the merits of the blessed man, the horse (the fact cannot be told without a shudder of horror) stopped short on the very outermost piece of earth which hung over the precipice, and when its fore-feet seemed about to plunge into the dark profundity of the abyss !

For this wondrous preservation of his life, the king in his heart, and with his lips, felt and expressed his thanks to God—intimating to others, that of which he was sincerely convinced, that his salvation from imminent death was to be attributed to that truly great man, and therefore the instant he returned to his home, he directed that Saint Dunstan should be sent for in all haste.

As soon as Dunstan had arrived, the king said to him, " Let a horse be prepared instantly for thee, for I wish " thee to travel with me, and with a small escort." The king's commands were at once obeyed, and as soon as all were mounted, they proceeded by the direct road to Glastonbury.

Upon their arrival in Glastonbury, they went, as it was their duty to do, to the different chapels to offer up their prayers. When the prayers were over, and that the king had removed from his countenance the vestiges of the abundant tears with which his orisons had been accompanied, he called Dunstan to his side, grasped him by the right hand, and as a testimony of the peace he had made with him, and as a mark of the dignity to which he would elevate him, he kissed the saint, and then conducting him to the sacerdotal throne, placed him in it; and said—" Be thou the prince in this place, its potent

"possessor, and the most faithful abbot of this church; "and whatsoever may be here wanting to thee, either for "the advancement and increase of divine worship, or for "the sustentation and administration of the sacred monastic "rule,* I will, with a devout heart and with a royal mu- "nificence, supply thee."†

Dunstan upon receiving these powers over that royal domain designated Glastonbury, commenced by laying the foundations for a glorious church, and also to construct buildings in accordance with a plan such as had been formerly exhibited to him;‡ and as soon as he had brought these to a completion, he gathered around him a large number of truly excellent monks.§ He was made the first abbot over these, and to such a state of perfection did he bring all who dwelt under the same roof with him, that they seemed to be a constellation of shining lights, whose brilliancy was sufficient to dispel the clouds of every error, and the darkness of every sin. From amongst these monks there were chosen for the adjoining churches, bishops to preside over dioceses, abbots for monasteries,

---

* "Et quicquid tibi ad divini cultus augmentum vel ad sacræ Regulæ supplementum de propria adminiculatione defuerit." BRIDFERTH.

"Quod si id cordi tuo potissimum sederit, ut ejus ordinis viros, cujus tu habitum geris, ibidem aggregare placuerit, quicquid eis in quacumque re defuerit, ego ob gratiam tui regia liberalitate supplebo." OSBERN, *Vit. S. Dunstan.* c. 4, § 21, *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 365.

† BRIDFERTH, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. 3, § 13, 14. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 350, 351.

‡ This alludes to the vision seen by St. Dunstan in his youth. See BRIDFERTH, *Vit.*, c. 1, § 3.

§ OSBERN, *Vit. S. Dunst.*, c. 4, § 21, p. 365. The account is preferred to that given by Bridferth, simply because of its brevity.

in fine, the men most fitted to fill the highest offices, because these monks had rendered themselves illustrious by their religious merits, renowned by their wisdom and learning, and conspicuous by being the most zealous defenders of the Catholic faith.*

Amongst the many benefits bestowed by king Edmund upon various churches, Glastonbury was peculiarly favoured. The gifts, the honours, and the privileges with which he distinguished it demonstrated his extraordinary affection for it. He bestowed upon it a charter.†

The donation of this charter took place in the year of

---

* Osbern, *Vit. S. Dunst.*, c. 4, § 21, p. 365. See Bridferth, *Vit.*, c. 3, § 15, pp. 351, 352.

† W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 142. "Et privilegium in hæc verba concessit." This charter is given in full, § 143, and will also be found in Malmsbury's *Antiquities of Glastonbury*, p. 318. It thus commences:—"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I Edmund, king of the English, and governor and ruler of the other surrounding nations, with the advice and consent of my nobility, and with the hope of an eternal reward, and for the remission of my sins concede to the church of Mary, mother of God, at Glastonbury, and to the venerable man Dunstan, whom I have there constituted abbot, full liberty and power, &c. &c." It then recites the different powers and jurisdictions conferred upon the abbot, giving him supreme rights within the limits of Glastonbury, and containing this important passage. "But more especially shall the town of Glastonbury, in which is situated that most celebrated and ancient church of the holy mother of God, together with its bounds, be *more free than other places*," (see Sharpe's *translation*). "Sed præcipue ipsa villa Glastoniæ, in qua celeberrima vetusta ecclesia sanctæ Dei genitricis sita est, præ cæteris sit liberior cum terminis suis"

The great resort of pilgrims to Glastonbury is thus incidentally referred to in a modern publication: "At Glastonbury an inn *formerly built by the abbot* for the accommodation of pilgrims, and then called 'the pilgrims' inn' still retains many traces of its ancient state." Hippisley *Chapters on Early English Literature*, p. 171.

our Lord 944, second indiction, and was inscribed in golden letters in a copy of the Evangelists, presented by him to the church, and was in itself a beautiful specimen of art.*

Even richer gifts were bestowed by king Edmund upon the same place. The relics of many saints sought for by him in Northumberland, and in places beyond the sea, and of which an account may be found in ancient manuscripts, were bestowed with a pious liberality upon Glastonbury.†

It was (observes Ingulphus) in the same year in which the young Edmund succeeded his brother on the throne, that Godric, the abbot of Croyland, departed this life; and within a month of his death he was followed by two of the old monks, viz., brother Swein, and brother Osgott, so that all then left remaining were five old monks, namely, brother Clarenbald, brother Swartting, brother Thurgar, brother Brun, and brother Aio.‡ The last two, seeing that they had lost their patron Athelstan, and their abbot Godric, were filled with an utter despair of ever again

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 143. "Scriptaque est literis aureis in libro evangeliorum quem eidem ecclesiæ obtulit eleganti satis opere compositum."

† W. Malmsb. *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, p. 318. "Multas reliquias quas per terram Norhanimbrorum, aut in etiam in partibus transmarinis, perquisierat Glastoniæ pia contulit liberalitate." The same author thus shows that those who prized the relics of saints exhausted their skill as artists in decorating and doing due honour to the Gospels.

‡ Ingulph. *Hist.*, p. 29.

beholding the restoration of the monastery and the perpetuation of their spiritual children, and therefore abandoned the society of their brethren, and repaired the one to the monastery at Winchester,* and the other to Malmsbury monastery. In both places they were willingly received, and in both remained for some years.

The other three—the remnant of the monastic brethren—constituted a holy trinity in hope—persevered in a confidence in their Lord, that He would, at some time or another, in His mercy, send a preserver to them, who would restore to its former condition that sanctified place containing the sacred relics of the most saintly confessor Guthlac; that He would make anew that truly holy monastery fruitfully abundant in spiritual offspring, and bring back again to it the monks, who were then dispersed over the country.†

In the course of this year (941), the Northumbrians preferring disloyalty to that fealty which they owed to Edmund, the magnificent king of the English,‡ abandoned

* Upon the grant of king Edmund to the new monastery of Winchester, see ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 271, § 12, and remarks as to the grant, p. 272, § 15.

† INGULPHUS, *Hist.*, p. 29. This author alludes to the appointment of St. Dunstan as abbot of Glastonbury, and that saint going to Fleury, for the purpose not only of becoming a monk, but of acquiring a perfect knowledge of its rules, "cum regulares observantias plenius didicisset." He affirms that the premature death of Edmund alone prevented him from raising Croyland monastery from the ashes of desolation to which it had been reduced—"ad resuscitandum de cineribus suæ desolationis."

This description of the condition of religion in 941 will demonstrate how dire had been the results of the Danish incursions.

‡ F. WIGORN, ad an. 941, p. 603.

their allegiance and chose Anlaf of Ireland for their king.* Edmund, however, who would have deemed it to be a disgrace to him if he could not maintain for himself the results of those victories which his brother had won, immediately marched at the head of his armies against the recreants. He forced them to abandon the positions that they occupied, and reduced all the towns that lay on this side of the Humber to acknowledge him as their sovereign.†

It was in the year 942 that Edmund wrested completely from the hands of the Danes their five burghs, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Derby, and reduced the entire of Mercia to his dominion.‡ As soon as the Danes had been expelled from these towns, and the marks

---

* "And Anlaf of Yrland him to cinge gecuron." *Sax. Chron.* "regem *Northmannorum* Anlafum sibi in regem elegerunt." F. WIGORN "Aanalafum *ab Hibernia* revocatum." W. MALMSB.

† W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 141.

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 603. Under the same date, this achievement is thus celebrated in the *Saxon Chronicle ;*

"Here Edmund the king, of Angles the Lord, and of friends the protector,
The author and doer of direful deeds,
O'erran with speed the Mercian land.
Where'er the course of Whitwell spring, or Humber deep
The broad brim-stream divides five towns—
Leicester, and Lincoln, Nottingham and Stamford,
And Derby likewise.
In thraldom long, to Norman Danes
They bowed through need,
And dragged the chains of heathen men.
Till to his glory, great Edward's heir,
Edmund the king, refuge of warriors,
Their fetters broke."

See INGRAM'S *translation*, p. 146. See also S. DUNELM, p. 155.

of their infidelity removed, the king, with God's grace, restored to them the light of faith and the glory of Christianity.*

Anlaf (upon his arrival in England) first advanced against York, he then directed his forces to the south, and laid siege to Southampton; but finding that his efforts against that place were of no avail, he marched to Tamworth.†

---

* Bromton, p. 857. See also Ethelred, *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, p. 358. The appointment of St. Dunstan as abbot of Glastonbury is stated to have taken place in this year. See F. Wigorn, p. 603. S. Dunelm., p. 155. *Chron. Petriburg.*, p. 28.

It was in this year that Pope Stephen IX. sent legates to the rebellious nobles of France, threatening them with excommunication if they did not forego their rebellion against their sovereign Louis. See Frodoard, ad an. 942. Richer, lib. ii. c. 27. "Hactenus," observes Baronius, "de his Frodoardus qui et paruisse Principes Romano Pontifici docet; ut plane tunc maxime quanti fecerint Principes Romani Pontificis, auctoritatum innotuerint." *Annal. Eccles.*, vol. xvi. p. 34. As to the beneficial results of the exercise of this power, see Alford, vol. iii. p. 274, § 1, and Gosselln. *Pouvoir du Pape au Moyen Age.*

Some of the monkish writers place erroneously in this year the assassination of William Duke of Normandy—a transaction of which the most full account is given in Richer, lib. ii. c. 30, 33. We only refer to the fact, for the purpose of alluding to his successor Richard, of whom it is stated by Bromton, that for some time before his death he had his coffin prepared, and every Friday it was filled with corn, which by his desire was distributed to the poor.

"—— Sarcophagum, quod quoad vixit qualibet sextu feria frumento fecit impleri, et pauperibus erogari." *Chron.*, p. 857. See *Roman de Rou*, 5879—5886.

† S. Dunelm. *Hist. Reg. Ang.*, p. 134. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 148.

It was in the year 943, that he stormed Tamworth. There was a frightful slaughter on both sides, but the Danes were so far successful, that they were able to carry off a great quantity of plunder. On this occasion a person named Wulfrun was made prisoner whilst engaged in spoiling the town.*

The same year king Edmund besieged the town of Leicester, into which Anlaf and archbishop Wulstan had thrown themselves, and he would, assuredly, have there conquered them, had they not contrived to burst out of the town during the night.†

It was in the neighbourhood of Leicester that the two armies met in hostile array.‡ They there fought a long and desperate battle, which lasted nearly the entire day, and was alike destructive to the forces of both. The two archbishops, Odo of Canterbury, and Wulstan of York,§

---

* *Sax. Chron.*, ad an. 943.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ Roc. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 395. See also S. Dunelm, p. 134. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 148.

§ This Wulstan certainly acted as a traitor to his sovereign, and it was his treason which probably compelled Edmund to accept the hard terms specified in the text. As a punishment for his treason he was imprisoned; but respect for his episcopal functions induced a pious monarch (Edred) to release him from his chains. This is the character given of archbishop Wulstan by the monk of Malmsbury:

"Hic tempore regis Eadmundi fratris Edelstani pertinacioribus studiis iram ejus emeritus, quod Danis contra eum rebellantibus faveret, ita quietum et benignum excitavit animum ut eum in vincula conjiceret. Sed non multo post actus pœnitudine, et respectu clericalis reverentiæ indemnem abire permisit: quamvis ille sibi datam veniam indignatus, vitam è vestigio exuit." *Gest. Reg. Pont.*, lib. iii, p. 269.

observing that such combats could but lead to the destruction of the kingdom, and the annihilation of its inhabitants, arranged the terms of a treaty between them. By this treaty, Anlaf was to possess all parts of the kingdom which were north of the great road called Watling Street, whilst Edmund was to enjoy, in undisturbed peace and tranquillity, every portion of the island which lay to the south of that boundary. It was also stipulated that whichever of them should survive the other should hold possession of the entire kingdom.

Anlaf obtained as his wife Alditha, the daughter of the jarl Orm,* by whose counsel and aid he had obtained this successful issue to his enterprise.†

A short time afterwards Anlaf won the friendship of king Edmund, who became his sponsor in Christian baptism,‡ and bestowed upon him many royal presents.

In the course of the same year, and after some interval of time,§ Reynold the king of Northumberland was, whilst being confirmed as a Christian, by the bishop, held by the hand, by king Edmund, who adopted him as his son.‖

---

* "Probably the same with Gorm Anglicus, king of the Danes, mentioned in the Chronicle of Petrus Olaus as having lost England, which his father Frotho, who had also been baptized there, had held twenty years. *Compare Script. Rer. Danic. ed. Langebek*, i. pp. 115, 231." COXE (Rog. de Wend., vol. i, p. 395, note 2,) E. H. S. See LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 121.

† ROG. DE WEND., vol. i, pp. 395, 396.

‡ "De lavacro sanctæ regenerationis." F. WIGORN.

§ *Sax. Chron.*

‖ F. WIGORN, p. 603.

Anlaf, who had but recently been created a king, whilst in the act of despoiling the church of Saint Baldred, and laying waste with fire the town of Tininghane, was struck with the awful judgment of God, and died the death of a wretch.*

In this year (943), the queen Edgiva gave birth to a son—Edgar.† The holy abbot Dunstan heard at the time, voices that seemed to be high up in the air, and which were as if intoning a psalm, and giving utterance to the words, "peace shall prevail amid the church of the English, during the time of the boy who has been born, and of our Dunstan.‡"

The children of Edmund and queen Edgiva were two sons, Edwy and Edgar the pacific. As the same soil is seen to produce nutricious herbage, and poisonous weeds, and as the thistle flowers by the side of the blooming rose, so was the self-same sovereign Edmund the father

---

* Rog. de Wend., vol. i, p. 396. As to Saint Balther, or Baldred, the violation of whose shrine was thus punished by the immediate vengeance of heaven, see *Act. Sanct.* (Mart.), vol. i. pp. 448, 449, 450. Baronius, vol. xvi. pp. 73, 74. Alford, vol. iii. p. 272, § 2. *Britannia Sancta*, vol. i, p. 159. Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. iii. p. 300.

† F. Wigorn, p. 603.

‡ Ibid. In Osbern's life of St. Dunstan, the words stated to have been heard pronounced by an angelic choir, were: "Sit pax, sit magna Anglorum Ecclesiæ lætitia, quam diu puer natus regnum tenuerit, et noster Dunstanus mortalis vitæ metus transegerit." *Vit.* c. 4. § 22. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai), vol. iv, p. 366. See R. Hoveden, p. 423. R. de Wend., p. 396. W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 148.

of the most sinful Edwy, and of the most pious Edgar. The latter was born in a vill close to Glastonbury, which is now called "Edgarlei," and that then was celebrated as one of the royal residences.*

In the year 944 king Edmund reduced all the land of the Northumbrians, and compelled it to submit to his dominion, whilst he, at the same time, expelled from the soil the two vikings Anlaf, the son of Sithric, and Reynold the son of Guthfrith.†

---

* *Antiq. Glaston.*, fol. 64, as quoted by ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 277, § 14. The idea expressed at the commencement of this passage, bears a strong resemblance to the words of Lampridius in his life of Heliogabulus, "eadem terra et venena ferat et frumentum, &c." *Hist. August. Script.*, vol. i. p. 793.

In the year 943 were adopted the constitutions of St. Odo. From these constitutions we shall content ourselves with making a single extract. It is with reference to the monks:

"We exhort the monks," says St. Odo, "and all who have bound themselves by vows to the service of God, that they live in perfect humility, and complete obedience, both by night and by day; that they endeavour thus to fulfil their duties, ever abiding in the fear of God, and in those churches to which they have by vow bound themselves. They are not wanderers nor wayfarers, who desire to possess the name of monks, and yet contemn the fulfilment of the duties of the monastic state. Let them follow the example of the apostles—ever wearing the habit of humility, labouring with their hands, engaged in holy reading, continually occupied with prayer, and so exercising themselves, and so prepared, they may with girded loins, and burning lamps await the Master of the house, so that when he does come, it may be to lead them to eternal rest, and where they shall remain for ever and for ever." *Odon. Constitution*, cap. 6, as quoted in ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 276, § 8.

† *Sax. Chron.* See S. DUNELM, *Hist. Reg.* p. 155. F. WIGORN, p. 604. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 148.

Reynold broke the treaty into which he had entered with king

King Edmund, when on his march towards Scotland, turned from the direct road to pay a visit to the tomb of St. Cuthbert, and to beg the prayers of that saint. Edmund bestowed, like his brother Athelstan, gold and tapestry upon the church, and all the laws, which were calculated to aid in its security, he confirmed.*

In this expedition the army of Edmund was accompanied by Odo, the archbishop of Canterbury, not that he might with them make war upon others; but that he might collect the sacred ashes of the saints, with which the land of the Northumbrians had formerly been richly adorned.† Thus did it happen, that in this expedition the heart of the holy bishop was saddened, when he beheld how the church at Ripon—that which had been the church of the most excellent father Wilfrid—had been torn down by the Danes. The ruins that covered the tomb of Wilfrid were cleared away by the directions of Odo, and the relics of the saint reverently transferred to Canterbury.‡

This year (944) Sexhelm was consecrated as bishop of Lindisfarne, upon the death of the prelate Uhthred.§ The

---

Edmund. In W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 141, it is stated that the penalty of Reynold's perfidy was perpetual exile, "perpetuo exilio pœnas luit." As to Anlaf see Hardy. W. Malmsb., vol. i. p. 212, note 4. (E. H. S.) See also Bromton, p. 857.

* S. Dunelm, *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 18, p. 26.

† W. Malmsb., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. i. p. 200.

‡ Ibid. See R. Dicet, p. 455. Higden, *Polychron.*, p. 263. Capgrave as quoted in Alford, vol. iii. p. 273, § 4.

§ F. Wigorn, p. 604.

new bishop was not however permitted to occupy the see for more than a few months, when he was driven out from it, by Saint Cuthbert himself.§

Sexhelm had wandered far away from the path pursued by his predecessors, for inflamed by avarice, he harassed with his exactions the people of the saint, and those who were bound to render service and tribute to the church. For this misconduct he was terrified by an apparition of the saint, which was heard by him in his sleep commanding him on the instant to depart from the diocese. Sexhelm hesitated whether he should submit to such a command; but a second time the order was given to him to retire with all speed, and a severe penalty was threatened against him should he make any longer delay. Even still Sexhelm was unwilling to depart; but a third time he was assailed with language far more severe than any that had been previously addressed to him—he was now commanded to fly at once, and in so doing not to presume to bring away one single particle of the property of the church. He was threatened with instant death should he longer refuse obedience to the command thus given to him.

Sexhelm awoke from his sleep, and as he did so, he felt a heavy sickness coming upon him. Ill as he was, and though quite unfitted for travelling, still the strong fear of death induced him at once to depart from the diocese.

He fled from Lindisfarne, and when he reached York, he felt his health had been restored to him. His successor Aldred was then appointed bishop.†

King Edmund, in the year 945, bestowed upon the

---

* S. Dunelm, *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 19, p. 26.

† Ibid. See Alford, vol. iii, p. 284, § 11.

church of the blessed martyr, St. Edmund, the royal vill of Bedericesworze,* and in which the body of the martyr rests until this day.† The king also bestowed on St. Edmund's a considerable portion of land encompassing that place; a gift which he, with pious devotion, had confirmed by the signatures of bishops, ealdormen, and thanes.‡

This year King Edmund overran all Cumberland, and then transferred it to Malcolm, king of the Scots, on condition that Malcolm should become his ally both by sea and land.§

---

* "The charter of this gift is printed in the *Monasticon*, tom. iii. p. 137, where it is expressed as 'ad monasterium quod situm est in loco, qui dicitur Baderichesworthe,'" &c. COXE, Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 397, note 4, (E.H.S.) "The very famous town of St. Edmund, called in the Saxon times, *Bederics-gueorde*, and in the British, as it seems, *Villa Faustini*, mentioned by Antoninus." CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. ii. p. 152. See also pp. 153, 159, 161.

† "Usque hodie corpus ejusdem martyris requiescit." ROG. DE WEND.

‡ ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 397. An account of the liberal grants made by King Edmund for pious uses will be found in ETHELRED, p. 358; THORN, pp. 2125, 2126; *Evident. Eccles. Cantuar.* p. 2221; W. MALMSB. *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 254; DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. i. pp. 3, 42, 60, 83, 154, 507, vol. ii. p. 427.

§ *Sax. Chron.* "Provincia quæ vocatur Cumberland, regi Scottorum Malcolmo, sub fidelitate jurisjurandi commendata." W. MALMSB. lib. ii. § 141. "Ut terra marique sibi fidelis existeret." F. WIGORN, p. 604. "Malcolmo regi commendavit." *Chron. Mailros*, p. 148. See also ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 398; FORDUN, *Hist. Scot.* lib. iv. c. 24, p. 673; H. HUNT. p. 355; CHALMER'S *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 389.

In the year 946, the queen (Gerberga) sent ambassadors to Edmund, king of the English, and to Otho, king of Germany, with letters containing the most bitter complaints on the state of affairs in France.* Otho was greatly grieved upon hearing of the unfortunate situation to which the king, as well as his own sister, (Gerberga) had been reduced, and he immediately sent an embassy to Hugh, requesting on many grounds the restoration of king Louis to liberty, and intimating that strong measures would be adopted, if this request were refused. King Edmund was still more deeply affected by the misfortunes of his relative; for he expressed, through his ambassadors, to duke Hugh, how extreme was his indignation at the conduct that had been pursued by the latter—he even threatened, that if Hugh did not release the French king, he would adopt at once hostile measures; that he would both by sea and by land raise up enemies against him; that he would become himself the leader of those enemies, and at their head lay completely waste the lands of Hugh; that if Hugh should seek to protect himself in a fortified town, he, Edmund, would conduct the siege in person, and capture him by main force; that, he, the English king, would even act as a general in France, and appeal to Frenchmen themselves to supply him with the means of carrying on the war; in fine, that if Hugh did not instantly release the king, then he, king Edmund, would instantly attack him both by land and sea.

Such threatening messages as these filled the heart of Hugh with strong and bitter emotions. His reply to the

* Richer. *Histor.* lib. ii. c. 49. At this time, Louis d'Outremer was a prisoner in the hands of Hugh the Great, Louis was the nephew, and Hugh the brother-in-law of Edmund.

ambassadors of Otho proved his willingness to conciliate the emperor, and at the same time his disinclination to grant what was required from him; but to the ambassadors of king Edmund his reply was, that he certainly would not then do that which had thus been demanded from him, nor should he ever do it, unless his own reason convinced him it ought to be done; and as to the threats of the English, they should never be able to move him in the slightest degree; that he desired they would, instead of threatening to come to France, come there, when they should learn by bitter experience what was the prowess of Frenchmen once they took up arms; but that now, if the English, stricken with fear, did not come to France, still they should, for this arrogant insult offered by them, be taught a severe lesson, how great was the power of the French, and through its exhibition suffer the penalty of their crime.*

It was in this angry and excited spirit that he drove the ambassadors from his presence.†

---

* ——"Pro arrogantiæ tamen illatione, Gallorum vires quandoque cognituros, et insuper pœnam luituros." RICHER.

† RICHER, *Histor.* lib. ii. c. 49, 50. The words quoted as having been used by Hugh—the same person who had plotted the assassination of William, duke of Normandy (Richer, lib. ii. c. 32,) cannot but be regarded as a threat against the life of King Edmund, and which was speedily followed by his assassination also. Richer proves that Edmund's threat of war had excited the resentment of Hugh. This is a fact which has hitherto remained unknown to English historians; for Frodoard merely states that Edmund sent ambassadors to Hugh, asking for the release of Louis from captivity, (Chron. Frodoard, 946). It seems to us that the extract given in the text, from the monkish writer, Richer, is of importance, as tending to throw some light on what otherwise appears to be a most obscure portion of English history—the apparently unprovoked assassination of the good King Edmund.

The great achievements and the happy events that marked the reign of Edmund were destined to be darkened by his own miserable death.*

Upon the day consecrated to the honour of St. Augustine, archbishop of Canterbury,† and one which, in honour of that great preacher of the gospel, the English always observed as a high festival, the king was at Pucklechurch (in Gloucester), when he observed amongst his guests a man named Leof, whom, on account of his robberies, he had banished, and who now, after an absence of six years, had not only returned to the country, but taken his seat close beside a great lord, whom the king had honoured with an invitation to sup especially with himself.‡ This circumstance was remarked by the king alone, for all the rest were indulging largely in draughts of wine. He, impelled by anger, and as if the fates had so destined it, jumped up from the table, seized the robber by the hair, and dashed him upon the earth. Leof then secretly drawing his dagger from its sheath, thrust it with all his force into the breast of the king, as he lay across him on the ground.§ And with that single wound the king had ceased

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 144.

† "Augustinus mæsse dæge." *Sax. Chron.*

‡ "Leof, quem propter latrocinia eliminaverat, post sexennium *regressus* ——— juxta ducem recumbebat quem rex ipse partibus de cœna dignatus fuerat." W. Malmsb. This wretch we find returning from banishment—probably from the camp of duke Hugh. His conduct too, in thus taking a conspicuous place, was that of a person who wished to provoke an outrage, for which he had come prepared with a concealed dagger, "latenter sicam."

§ According to Roger de Wendover: "The king, upon perceiving Leof standing amongst his guests, directed his cup-bearer to have the robber removed as quickly as possible from the palace, but that this wicked man would not stir for the request of the cup-

to live; his death giving rise to many rumours throughout all England, as to the manner in which it had been brought about.*

As to the regicide, he was on the instant cut to pieces by the king's guards, although he did not fall until he had inflicted wounds on some of them.

The miserable death of this monarch had been surmised by Saint Dunstan, then abbot of Glastonbury, from the

---

bearer, and that then the king in a great rage jumped up from the table, seized Leof by the hair, and cast him down on the pavement; that the traitor, finding himself thus assaulted, and the king lying over him, suddenly drew a knife, which he carried secretly about his person, and with it murdered Edmund." Vol. i. pp. 398, 399. Florence of Worcester states, that "Edmund was slain by Leof, whilst endeavouring to save his butler from being killed by the hands of that most abandoned robber—e manibus pessimi cleptoris," p. 604. See M. WEST., p. 188. H. HUNT. p. 355. R. HOVEDEN, p. 423. Two different versions are given by BROMTON, and both intimate that there was a scene of tumult, and, according to the first, the king's assassin was killed; but the second affirms that he made his escape, "illæsus inter manus tumultuantium est dilapsus," p. 858.

* "And it was widely known how he ended his days,"—*and wæs wide cuth hu he his dagas ge-endode. Sax. Chron.* An opposite opinion is expressed by Wallingford: "Sed qua ratione vel a quo occisus fuit usque ad præsens incertum habetur." *Chron.* p. 541. See in same page the curious story told by him of a stranger seen by St. Dunstan, in the court of Edmund, and the stranger declaring that he desired to deliver a message to his majesty, but upon being closely questioned, hastily disappearing, so that, to use the words of Wallingford, no one could tell "whether he was a real man appearing there in person, or a spirit bearing the appearance of a man,"—nescitur uter spiritus esset in forma aliena, an homo verus in sua. Whatever be these rumours, "fabulæ," (as they are designated by Malmsbury), or how little so ever may be the value attached to them, they all tend to shew that the death of Edmund was an assassination that had been previously determined upon, and give, we think, an air of probability to the suggestion we have ventured to make—viz. that the crime originated in the resentment, and probably the fears, of Hugh the Great

antic gesticulations and malevolent frolics of a demon, that he saw capering before him; and he, for this reason, rode hastily forward to the palace; but the melancholy tidings met him in the midst of his journey.

It was by common consent then decreed that the body of the king should be conveyed to Glastonbury, and there with all fitting magnificence entombed in the northern tower. That such was the will of the deceased monarch was proved by many conspicuous marks of his majesty's esteem and respect for the abbot Dunstan. It was at the same time also decreed that there should be assigned to the memory of the departed, the vill in which he had been slain, so that the same place that had been the witness of his homicide might for ever after aid in bestowing a benefit upon his soul.*

---

* W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 144. See Osbern, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 4, §. 23. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 364. The words with which Malmsbury concludes are worthy of being quoted: "data in inferias villa in qua occubuerat, ut quæ semel conscia fuerat homicidii, semper in posterum pro anima ejus esset adjutrix beneficii." Vol. i. p. 229, (E.H.S.) The signification of these words cannot be mistaken. The revenues of this property were assigned to the saying of masses for the repose of the soul of Edmund, and to procure for him the prayers of the poor benefitted by the acts of charity of which they thus became participators. Amongst the Monastic Rules regulating the prayers and offerings made for the benefit of the souls of the faithful departed, we find the following:

"——— XII. pauperes ubertim sunt reficiendi de pane, vino, et carne; et quotquot pauperes alii supervenerint, omnibus de pane et vino misericordia impendenda. Et quia refectio nostra non injuria lautior est propter omnes sanctos, quam propter omnes fideles defunctos, in ipsa festivitate omnium SS. quicquid panis et vini superest ad mensam. ad eleemosynam datur." *De Antiquis Monachorum Ritibus*, lib. iv. c. 9. Martene, vol. iv. p. 207.

LAWS OF KING EDMUND.

"King Edmund assembled a great synod at London, during the holy Easter tide, as well as of ecclesiastical as of secular degree. There was Odo, archbishop, and Wulfstan, archbishop, and many other bishops, meditating concerning the condition of their souls, and of those who were subject to them."*

"This is the first: that those holy orders who have to teach God's people by their life's example, hold their chastity according to their degree, whichsoever it may be. If they do not do so, then are they worthy of that which in the canon is ordained; that is, that they forfeit their worldly possessions, and a consecrated burial place, unless they make 'bot.'†

"A tithe we enjoin to every Christian man by his Christendom, and church-scot, and '*Rome-feoh*,' and plough-alms, and if any one will not do so, let him be excommunicated.‡

"Edmund, king, makes known to all people, both old and young, that are in his dominion, that which I have deliberated with the council of my 'witan,' both ecclesiastical and secular. First, how I might most promote Chris-

---

* Thorpe's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, p. 104.

† Ibid. § 1.

‡ Ibid. § 2. The succeeding sections, § 3, 4, and 6, affix various penances and punishments to those guilty of homicide, impurity, and perjury; and § 5 imposes upon the bishops the duty of repairing "the houses of God" in their districts, and also that they "remind the king that all God's churches be well conditioned," pp. 104, 105. These are given by Mr. Thorpe as the Ecclesiastical Institutes passed in the reign of king Edmund. To these succeed the secular laws, to which reference is made in the text.

tianity. Then seemed it to us, first, most needful that we should most firmly preserve our peacefulness and harmony among ourselves, throughout all my dominion. To me and to us all are exceedingly offensive the unrighteous and manifold fightings that are among ourselves."*

As to slaves who commit thefts, the eldest amongst them should be taken and put to death with the sword, or hung, whilst his companions are to be whipped three times, banished out of the district, and the little finger of each cut off, as a mark of his infamy.†

---

* THORPE's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, p. 105. Preamble to secular laws. See p. 106, several ordinances against homicide and blood shedding. In pp. 108, 109, will be found ordinances relating to the betrothal, marriage-property, and security of females.

† Ibid. p. 107. *Concil. Culinton*, § 4. See also BROMTON, pp. 858, 862. See TWYSDEN's *Glossary*, as to the word "*extorpari*" used in this section.

CHAPTER VII.

EDRED.

EDRED, the brother of Edmund, succeeds to the throne in preference to the sons of Edmund.. receives an oath of fealty from the Scotch. Confidence reposed by Edred in St. Dunstan.. its beneficial effects. St. Odo refutes a heresy by a miracle. Revolt of the Northumbrians in the year 947. Death of the Empress of Germany.. the daughter of Edward the Elder. Abingdon bestowed by the king, upon St. Ethelwold, as a monastery. St. Ethelwold a citizen of Winchester.. an account of his piety and virtues.. labours as a gardener in the monastery of Glastonbury. Vision of St. Dunstan respecting St. Ethelwold. Northumbria overrun by the forces of Edred. Visit of the Chancellor Turketul to Croyland. Turketul's conference with king Edred, upon the chancellor proposing to become a monk at Croyland. The chancellor takes the vows of a monk, and is made abbot of Croyland. St. Dunstan

offered the see of Winchester by the king, and pressed to accept it by the queen mother.. he refuses the dignity tendered to him. Vision of St. Dunstan. The archbishop of York ordered to be put in close custody. The Northumbrians voluntarily submit to Edred in the year 954. The death of Edred.. his pious bequests.

CHAPTER VII.

EDRED.

A.D 946—955.

EDMUND in dying had left two sons, legitimate heirs to the throne—Edwy and Edgar—but neither being of legal years to undertake the duties of a sovereign, could not be the immediate successors to their father.* Edred, then as the immediate heir, succeeded his brother, and as his by natural right assumed the government of the kingdom,† and on Sunday, the 17th of the calends of Sep-

* Reliquit quoque duos filios hæredes legitimos, Eadwinum et Eadgarum, qui, repugnante illegitima ætate, patri succedere non valebant." ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 399.

† "Mox proximus hæres Edredus, fratri succedens, regnum naturale suscepit." F. WIGORN, ad an. 946, p. 604. These two passages serve to illustrate the customs that prevailed formerly as to the succession to the throne. Edwy succeeded king Edred, although the latter had children. See HARDY, W. MALMSBURY, vol. i. p. 233, note 1.

The expression in Florence of Worcester appears to be borrowed from BRIDFERTH'S *Life of St. Dunstan*, c. 4, § 19. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 353.

tember, was consecrated as a monarch at Kingston, by the hands of Saint Odo, archbishop of Canterbury.*

Edred, who was the third of the sons of Edward, proved by his achievements that he had not degenerated from the magnanimity and courage of his father and brothers.† He, as his brother Edmund had done, reduced the entire of Northumbria under his supreme command and then received an oath of fealty from the Scots, as subjects who were bound to be faithful to his crown.‡

No sooner was Edred elevated to the throne than he demonstrated by his extreme affection for Saint Dunstan, that there was not one, even of the highest rank amongst his courtiers, who was preferred by him to that sanctified father.§ This affection of the monarch was responded on the part of Dunstan by the deepest, sincerest, and most heart-felt love, and it was demonstrated to all by the open, avowed, and oft-repeated declaration of Dunstan, "that the

---

* F. WIGORN, p. 604. See *Vit. S. Odo*, c. 2, § 25. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii,) vol. ii. p. 70. R. DICET., p. 455.

† W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § 146.

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 604. "The Scots gave him oaths that they would do all that he desired." *Sax. Chron.*, 946. "Northanhimbros et Scottos facile ad sacramentum suæ fidelitatis adactos." W. MALMSB., lib. ii. § 146. See H. HUNT., p. 355. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 148. S. DUNELM., *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. 20, p. 26. *Hist. Reg.*, pp. 134, 135, 156. BROMTON, p. 862. HIGDEN. *Polychron.*, lib. vi. p. 264. Fordunius states that Malcolm made peace with Edred, having through Indulfus done him homage for Cumberland," lib. iv. c. 25, p. 674.

§ BRIDFERTH, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. 4, § 19. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol iv. p. 353.

"friend the most cherished by him beyond all others was "king Edred." In accordance with that mutual love, which thus existed between these illustrious persons, the king confided to Dunstan the most valuable things that he possessed—placed in his hands all the charters and deeds of his lands—nay, even the hereditary treasures, which had come to him from the kings, his predecessors, as well as the riches which he had himself acquired, were placed by Edred under the protection and in the guardianship of the monastery over which St. Dunstan presided.* Dunstan was made by Edred to be as if he were the king, or the king of the king, that is, he was employed to wield to the utmost limits of the English dominions the wand of equity, the sceptre of the kingdom of God; to provide for the foundation of churches where churches were required, and to endow with large possessions churches that had been already founded, but that had become oppressed by want; in fine, to give to the people cause for joy in the power that he exercised, to enable them to feel what happiness there is when peace and justice are united together in the administration of a nation's affairs.†

Dunstan, the most worthy abbot of Glastonbury monastery, was a man of conspicuous probity, and whilst possessed of great influence with the king, he was at the same time much honoured by the people.‡ Odo was then far advanced in years, as in virtue; he was dignified alike by religion, and by habits; he excelled in authority as in

---

* Bridferth., *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. 4, § 19, p. 353.

† Osbern, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. 5, § 24, *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 366.

‡ *Vit. S. Odo.*, c. 2, § 26. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii,) vol. ii. p. 70.

meekness; and had ennobled the entire kingdom by the christian constitutions which had emanated from his prudence. They had in Edred a king, who feared God, who loved with a tender, and as if an especial, regard the virtuous, and who, imitating in all things the manners, the maxims, and the morals of a truly good prince, kept down with a strong hand the wicked, lest they should ever possess the power of oppressing the peaceable and well-conducted.

It was about this time—(in the year 946*)—that some clerks,† seduced by a wicked error, attempted to assert "that the bread and wine which are placed on the altar "remain, after being consecrated, in their former substance, "and that they constitute only a figure of the body and "blood of Christ, and are not the true body and blood of "Christ."

Saint Odo, wishing to put an end to this enormous infidelity, was upon a certain day, and in the presence of all the people, devoutly celebrating the most holy sacrifice of the Mass, when he with tears besought of God that He would in His mercy present Himself in this Mystery, and that to dispel the errors of mortals, He would make manifest what was the proper and peculiar substance of such mysteries. And then, when he had come to that part of the mass, in which the bread of life is broken—(Oh! the ineffable mercy of God! oh! the visible presentation of His Eternal Majesty!)—from the fragments of the body

---

* "Hoc ferme tempore." *Vit. S. Odo.* We follow Alford in fixing the date of the heresy described in the text. See *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. p. 288, § 4.

† "Quidam Clerici." *Vit. S. Odo.*, c. 2, § 26.

of Christ which was held in the hands of the bishop, blood began to flow—drop following drop!

Thus stood the bishop, whilst tears of joy poured in abundant streams from his eyes—he notified to those who were there as his assistant ministers, that they especially should come up beside him who had lately been faltering in their faith. The persons thus called were speedily by his side* and terrified, as they regarded such awful facts as these, they in trembling accents exclaimed,

* " —— innuit adstantibus *ministris*, ut *illi potissimum* proprius accedant, *qui* nuper in fide titubaverant. *Vocati* igitur *celeriter* adsunt." *Vit. S. Odo* c. 2, § 28. These unbelievers are again spoken of as persons immediately attached to the bishop, " suorum," and it may be inferred as connected with the service of the particular church, in which the miracle was effected—" quod omnis error de Dominico corpore in pectore *suorum* abolitus fuisset; nec ultra *panem in altari positum*, verum Christi corpus esse *diffiderent qui* verum sanguinem *inde* manare conspexissent," § 29. These words, coupled with the description given to these unbelievers as being " *clerici*," induce us to come to the conviction that not one of the unbelievers here referred to was what the Saxons call " a mass-priest"—" *sacerdos*"—that they were nothing more than a few, poor ignorant " clerks;" and that their heresy—like every other heresy that we know of—though it found learned persons at a subsequent period, and for their own purposes, to sustain it—arose out of the audacity of half-ignorance, and much presumption. It is a fact, which we have never yet observed noticed with that especial attention that it merits—that heresy, which always is sustained by pride, and may be adorned with much vain learning, can still be traced back for its originators to the meanest, basest, and most ignorant persons—that great heretics, royal heretics, and philosophic infidels are almost universally but plagiarisers from the rabble, and the second-hand ventilators of the crude notions of dunces.

For aught we know, the person with whom the notion first originated of denying the real presence may have been a " *clericus*," such as the monk of St. Gall describes:—" Unum clericum—quidam coccio derasus insulsus et insaniens linea tantum et femoralibus indutus." *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. v. p. 129. See p. 221 of this volume. Much confusion has arisen from the improper application of the

"Oh! thou most happy of all men this day, since the "Son of God has deigned to reveal Himself in the flesh to "thee." And then they were heard saying—"Pray, oh! "father of the priesthood, pray and beseech of the Majesty "of the God that this blood may be changed again to its "pristine form, lest the Divine Vengeance should pursue "the error of our disbelief."

---

word "clericus"—a very unfair use has been made of it in latter times by translating it as if it never meant any thing else than "priest or clergyman." In the text we translate it, according to the primitive sense—"Clerici generaliter dicuntur, qui in Ecclesia Dei deserviunt, *duntaxat* ordinem habeant"—(see DUCANGE, in verb. *clerici*, pp. 118, 119. Paris edit., 1678)—in that sense, in which we believe it was most generally used at the time of the miracle operated by St. Odo. The point is one, on which we are sure there never would have been any dispute, as there would not have been any controversy as to this miracle, had there never been any "*clerici conjugati*." The miracle of St. Odo probably saved the souls of a few half-learned persons, whilst it at once suppressed the heresy in England. A long period of time elapsed before it again reappeared in this country. As to miracles demonstrative of transubstantiation prior to the days of St. Odo, see the words employed by Paschasius Radbertus, lib. de corpore et sanguine, cap 14, as quoted by Pagi in his notes on Baronius, vol. xvi. p. 63, § 5. See also *Vit. S. Paschasius Act. Sanct.* (April), vol. iii. *Vit.*, § 3, p. 463. The heresy denying transubstantiation did not attract the marked attention of the church till the year 1025, when it was plainly put forward by some obscure persons who also rejected baptism, penance, and matrimony. See same vol. of BARONIUS, p. 553, § 11. The miracle recited in the text is declared by Mr. Wharton (*Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 82,) to be a fraud perpetrated by Osborn to please Lanfranc. For this accusation there is not the slightest foundation, but Mr. Wharton's own want of charity. As to his assertion that there was no question about transubstantiation during the life time of Odo, we have abundant evidence in the life of St. Paschasius Radbertus, that such a heresy did then exist, and we find the point dwelt on at much length by a German Lutheran. See GFRÖRER, *Geschichte der Ost und Westfrankischen Carolinger*, vol. i. pp. 250, 253. (Freiburg, 1848).

He who was the priest did so pray; and having prayed, he turned his regards to the altar, and where he had previously seen blood, he now found the usual species of wine. He then took the heavenly sacraments, amid the joy of all who had the happiness of being present at this mighty spectacle. In honour and in testimony of this great miracle, the bishop ordered the poor to be collected from all parts of the country, and a solemn feast to be prepared for them.* He and his friends proved their joy in their thankful and devout prayers, because every error, with regard to the body of the Lord, had been expelled from the heart of his subordinates,† for they could no longer doubt that the bread which was placed on the altar was the true body of Christ, when they themselves had seen His real blood flowing from it.‡

In the year 947, king Edred proceeded to Taddenscliff, where he was met by archbishop Wulstan, and by the entire of the council of the Northumbrians, who all bound themselves in a most solemn manner to bear allegiance to him. Within a short space of time however they broke their oaths, and renounced their allegiance,§ by

---

* "Præcepit Pontifex pro testimonio tantæ virtutis, omnes undecunque pauperes aggregari, et solenne convivium eisdem præparari." *Vit. S. Odo*, c. ii, § 29. Thus it is that a true Catholic bishop always manifests his gratitude for Divine favours conferred on him.

† "In pectore suorum." Ibid.

‡ *Vit. S. Odo*, c. ii, § 26—29. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. ii. pp. 70, 71.

§ *Sax. Chron.*

elevating to the Northumbrian throne, and acknowledging as their king a certain person of Danish origin, named Eric.*

---

* F. WIGORN, ad an. 947. This is confirmed by the Saxon Chronicle, 948, which states "Her Eadred cyning oferhergode eall North-hymbra land, for thæm the hi hæfdon genumen him Yric to cyninge." On the other hand it is affirmed by Henry of Huntingdon that "Anlaf who had been expelled from Northumbria, returned with a large fleet, was received by the Northumbrians with great joy, again restored to the throne, and courageously maintained his position for four years: (p. 355), a statement that is also confirmed by the *Saxon Chronicle*, for under the date 952, it mentions "the Northumbrians expelled king Anlaf." The only mode of reconciling these statements is by supposing that two different incursions of Northmen were made about the same period, and that the invaders found friends, allies and supporters amongst the Danes in those portions of Northumbria in which they established themselves. The difficulties of this portion of English history do not end here, for in 948, the *Saxon Chronicle* mentions that the Northumbrians "abandoned Eric;" in 952, that "they received Eric the son of Harold;" and in 954, that they "expelled Eric;" whilst Roger de Wendover mentions that in the year 950, (vol. i, pp. 402, 403), king Eric with his son Henry and brother Reginald, were betrayed and put to death by an earl Osulf and a dignitary named Macon," a fact, that is confirmed by Hoveden (p. 423), who not only mentions that Eric was put to death, and Osulf made earl, but also states the limits of the earldom of Northumberland, entrusted to him, (see pp. 423). The death of Eric is confirmed by the Northern historian Adam of Bremen: the appointment of earls, and the cessation of kings in Northumbria, by Simon of Durham in the year 954, the same year, which the Saxon Chronicle fixes for the final expulsion of Eric. The Heimskringla throws some light—but it is only a doubtful and uncertain light—upon these transactions; for it confounds the victory of Athelstan in 838, and the expulsion of Anlaf, the son of Sithric, and Reynold the son of Guthferth in 944, with the pretensions and struggles of Eric in the reign of Edred for the Northumbrian throne. See SNORRO *Konung Hakon Adalsten's Fostres Saga*, c. iii, iv, v, vol. i, pp. 128, 132.

In the text we do not deem it to be necessary to allude any further

It was in the year 947, that the lady Edgiva, (the wife of Otho of Germany), departed this life, to the great grief of her husband; and, amid the loud lamentations of her subjects, was interred at Magdeburg.* Her merits in the sight of God were manifested by the many miracles with which she was favoured during her life, and that honoured her relics when she was dead.†

King Edred was, beyond all other things, desirous of doing honor to the strict piety of monks, and therefore he presented to St. Ethelwold a certain place named Abingdon, in which there was formerly a small monastery, but that in his time, being neglected and destitute, consisted only of a few mean edifices, and did not possess more than

---

to these different events, beyond what we find mentioned of them in the Saxon Chronicle. Those however who wish for further information respecting them are referred, in addition to the authorities already specified in this note, to BROMTON, p. 862. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 128, WALLINGFORD, p. 541, BARONIUS *cum critic.* PAGI., vol. xvi, pp. 68, 69; LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii, pp. 125, 126. TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii, pp. 228, 231.

* Continuator Regionis, ad an. 947. PERTZ. *Monument German Histor.*, vol. i, p. 620. See ad an. 930, 939; pp. 616, 618. She was the daughter of Edward the elder, and wife of the emperor Otho the great, see W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § 112, 126. The greatness of Magdeburg is identified with the memory of the English princess Edgiva. See MEIBOM, vol. i, p. 687, MARTINIERE, vol. iv. pp. 26, 27, 28, (*m*).

† LUPOLDUS, c. 13, as quoted in ALFORD, vol. iii, p. 290, § 15. The author adds that she was most bountiful in her charities to the poor, and tells a most interesting anecdote respecting her, and a miracle wherewith she was favoured by heaven, because of her, as of other sure catholic queens, it could be said—"in eleemosynis pauperum largissima."

forty farms.* The remainder of the land attached to the monastery, being about one hundred hides in extent, was the property of the king, and as such held by him. With the consent of his abbot Dunstan, and in accordance with the king's wish, the care of this place was entrusted to Ethelwold, in order that he might there ordain monks, and bring them up in the regular service of God.†

The parents of the saintly Ethelwold were descended, from a pure family of Christians.‡ They were citizens of Worcester, and at the time the saint was born, that is, during the reign of Edward the elder, were thriving and prosperous, faithfully and blamelessly walking in accordance with the commandments of God. They lived in the performance of good works, and so much abounded in them, that they merited to have given to them as an offspring one whose erudition and whose example were not merely to confer a benefit upon his contemporaries, but upon future ages—to bring these as well as those to a knowledge of the true light, so that casting off the darkness of error, they might enjoy the illumination of eternal glory.§

Ethelwold was yet unborn when his happy mother was

---

* *Annales de Hida*, as quoted by ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 296, § 23. This monastery had been originally founded by Cissa the father of king Ina. Ibid., ad an. 688, § 9.

† *Annales de Hida* as quoted by ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 296, § 23. The appointment of Ethelwold to Abingdon monastery is fixed by Alford in 948. We prefer the authority of Sollerius, see *Act. Sanct.*, (August), vol. i. p. 86. *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, § 3, 11, 16.

‡ WOLSTAN, *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, c. i. § 1. *Act. Sanct.*, (August), vol. i. p. 89.

§ Ibid.

visited by a dream which appeared to be a certain presage of his destiny. There seemed to spring suddenly from her mouth, and to fly up into the air, a golden eagle of wondrous size, and which as it flew, seemed to shadow all the houses of Winchester, with its wings, and then to rise high into the heavens, until at last it vanished from her sight.*

Upon a certain day his mother stood in the midst of a great crowd, which was in the church, and whilst she was desirous of being present at the celebration of mass, she felt the spirit of life penetrating the frame of her unborn child. This circumstance the saint, when a bishop, joyfully narrated to the present writer.† The fact is one that plainly shews not only that he was an elect of God even before he was born, but also that the soul of man does not, as some affirm, originate with his mere father and mother; but that it is to be believed that the vital spirit has alone its vivifying power from the Creator himself, and is by Him given to each individual.‡

Ethelwold was in the very flower of his youth, when the fame of his sanctity reached the ears of Athelstan the son of king Edward. He was in consequence of this ordered to court, where he found favour in the eyes of his sovereign, and won for himself the approbation of the nobles. He passed a great portion of his time in the king's palace, and was there able to acquire a large store of useful and profitable knowledge from the wise counsellors of the king. At

* Wolstan, *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, c. i, § 2, abridged from the original.

† "Sicut postea ipse sanctus, qui nasciturus erat, jam episcopus nobis gaudendo referebat." Wolstan, *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, c. i. § 4.

‡ Ibid., pp. 89, 90.

length, by the special directions of his majesty, the tonsure according to ecclesiastical custom was imposed upon him by Elphegus bishop of Winchester, when Ethelwold was appointed to the office of clerk, and after the lapse of a few years, he was consecrated as a priest.*

Ethelwold was a true servant of Christ—in name, in thought, and in deed. Ever adhering to the narrow path which leads to eternal life, he daily studied to advance in perfection, by a strict attention to the teaching and example of Elphegus, who had received him into the church, and who had ordained him as a priest. It was in accordance with the king's command that he remained with Elphegus, and this for his greater improvement. He afterwards went to Glastonbury, for the purpose of placing himself under the guidance, and subjecting himself to the discipline of its abbot, the truly magnificent Dunstan. Ethelwold profited greatly under Dunstan's instructions, and finally received from him the monastic habit, abandoning himself with an humble devotion to the rules of the establishment. He there acquired an accurate knowledge of prose literature, and was imbued with all the science that could give him a mastery over the metrical sweetness of verse. He read with the zeal of an eager student the most distinguished Catholic authors, whilst he was perseveringly constant in vigils and in prayers, subduing himself by abstinence, and exhorting his brother monks to be indefatigable in overcoming difficulties. Deservedly loved by all for his sanctity, he was appointed by the abbot of his monastery as deacon. This elevation placed him in no peril: on the contrary, it afforded him the opportunity

* WOLSTAN, *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, c. i. § 7, p. 90, abridged.

of manifesting his humility—so much so, that with his own hands he was to be found daily occupied in tilling the monastery garden; rearing vegetables of various kinds, and placing before the monks at dinner the apples which he himself had plucked;* so that the same person who afforded a spiritual refection for their souls, also toiled to supply the necessary wants of their bodies. Ethelwold thus acted because he had always present to his mind the precept of our Lord: "If any man desire to be first, he shall be the last of all, and the servant of all."†

At the time that Dunstan was abbot of Glastonbury, and Ethelwold serving as a monk under him, the former saw in a dream, as if outside of the monastery, a tree, that appeared to be of a marvellous height, and the branches of which seemed to be spread out to the east and the west, to the north and the south, so that with its vast length and breadth it was extended all over the British land; and the branches of this tree were laden with monks' cowls, some large and some small, whilst over all, as the topmost fruit of all, was a cowl of enormous magnitude, that with its wide-stretched sleeves seemed to shade all the other cowls, even as it rose up in pre-eminent grandeur and height, until it looked as if it touched the sky. The man of God, Dunstan, astonished at such a vision as this, enquired its meaning from a snowy-haired, angelic priest, who appeared to direct his attention to it. "What means, I beseech "you," he said, "venerable sage, that sturdy and lofty

* "Ut quotidiano manuum opere hortum excolendo laboraret, et fratribus ad prandium poma, ac diversi generis legumina præpararet."

† Wolstan, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. i. § 9, *Act. Sanct.* (August) vol. i. p. 90, abridged.

"tree, which bears upon its long and wide-spreading "branches such an innumerable quantity of cowls?" To which question this was the reply: "The tree, abbot "Dunstan, that thou lookest upon signifies the condition "of this island: the great cowl which is uplifted on its top "is that of thy monk Ethelwold, who is in this monastery "a devout servant of Christ. The other cowls with which "the branches are laden down, designate the multitude "who shall be instructed by his erudition, and who shall "be congregated from all parts of the country, for the "purpose of devoting themselves to the service of Almighty "God; and who, under his guidance, shall attain to the "glory of the kingdom of heaven, to reign with Christ and "the spirits of the blessed for ever." Upon hearing this response the holy man awoke. He first maturely reflected on the vision, and afterwards gave an accurate relation of it to the faithful.*

---

* WOLSTAN, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 4, § 38, *Act. Sanct.* (August) vol. i. p. 95. See for an account of the same vision, W. MALMSB. *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii., pp. 243, 244.

This vision is inserted here, because it conveys, although in a symbolical form, an accurate idea of the successful efforts made by Ethelwold to repair the damage done to religion by the Danes, in his restoring to England its "monkery." In order that the reader may the better appreciate the motives by which St. Ethelwold was actuated, we take the following anecdote from his biographer and contemporary, Wolstan, the monk of Winchester:

"At a certain time a severe famine spread over the entire of the British district, and so great was the calamity that many must have died of sheer starvation, had not this man of God taken pity on the multitude, that he thus saw perishing from hunger. He expended for the use of the poor all the money that he had, (omnem pecuniæ portionem quam habebat, in usus pauperum expendit). And when he had no more money, he ordered all the ornaments and silver vessels (and there were a great many of them) that were in the treasuries of the church to be taken, broken into small pieces,

Ethelwold was desirous of possessing a still greater amount of scriptural knowledge than he had acquired, and of being instructed in the most perfect rules that had been discovered for monastic discipline, and to attain both objects had determined upon travelling to places beyond the sea. These efforts were rendered vain by the venerable queen Edgiva, who advised the king not to permit so great a man to depart from the country, assuring Edred that the wisdom of Ethelwold could not only well suffice for himself, but was abundant for the guidance of others; and hence, there was not the slightest necessity for his seeking in foreign lands for that of which he was already possessed.*

---

and converted into money; declaring, with a heavy spirit and a sad heart, that he could not endure that inanimate metals should be left whole and untouched, whilst man, created in God's likeness, and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, should perish through beggary and want, (ferre non posse, muta metalla integra perdurare, hominem vero ad imaginem Dei creatum et pretioso Christi sanguine redemptum mendicitate et inedia perire). He thus purchased food, and supported an immense number of the destitute, who resorted to him from all quarters to be saved from starvation. Some that were found by him in streets and bye-ways, lying on the earth and deprived of all relief, were taken up by him, nurtured, cherished, restored not only to life, but snatched from the jaws of death. Daily food was supplied by him to all who wanted it, until at last the mercy of God descended upon the earth, and the plague of famine was stayed by His omnipotent hand." WOLSTAN, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 3, § 29, *Act. Sanct.* (August) vol. i. pp. 93, 94.

Such was the conduct of one who was not merely a monk, but who laboured all his life to spread "monkery" over every part of England.

* WOLSTAN, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. i. § 10, p. 91. The queen Edgiva here mentioned is not to be confounded with St. Elgiva, the wife of Edmund. Edgiva was the wife of Edward the elder, and the mother of Edmund and Edred. See W. MALMSB. lib. ii. § 126, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. v. § 25, *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 366. As to Elgiva, see *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 186, 187.

The king was delighted to have this assurance from his mother—he conceived a strong love for this great servant of God, and upon the suggestion of his mother, presented him with the monastery of Abingdon.

* * * * * *

Ethelwold arrived at the place which had been entrusted to him, and he was immediately followed by some clerks from Glastonbury, namely, Osgar, Foldbirth, and Friwegar; from Winchester by Ordbirth; and by Eadric from London; who submitted themselves as disciples to his guidance. In a short space of time he gathered around him a flock of monks, over whom he was, by the king's command, ordained as abbot. The king gave all the royal property he had in Abingdon, consisting of a hundred hides of land, and the best buildings on them, to the abbot and the monks, to aid in affording them daily subsistence. The king also assisted them with grants of money from the royal treasury; but the most material benefit was conferred on them by the donations of the queen-mother. So much grace did these servants of the Lord find in His eyes, that this monastery, which at one time had been the poorest in earthly substance, in a brief period appeared to superabound in wealth, so that with it was plainly realized the promise of our Saviour: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his "justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."*

Upon a certain day (in the year 947) the king came to the monastery, in order that he might himself give directions as to the construction of the edifices for it. The king on this occasion measured with his own hand the foundations of the monastery; and gave his command as

---

* Wolstan, *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, c. i. § 11, p. 91, abridged.

to the manner in which he desired that the walls should be built. Upon this occasion the king with his attendants dined with the abbot, and as there were amongst the followers of Edred, some of the leading men of Northumbria, they were by the king abundantly supplied with mead.*

The buildings which had thus been planned were not however commenced by Ethelwold during the reign of king Edred.†

In the year 948 the entire of Northumbria was overrun by king Edred, because its inhabitants had accepted Eric as a king.‡ In the devastation that was then carried on, the monastery of Ripon, which had been constructed by the holy bishop Wilfrid, was destroyed by fire.§

Whilst the king was marching homeward from this expedition, the rear of his army was attacked, at a place called Chesterford, by the Danish forces, who suddenly made a sortie from the city of York, and destroyed an immense number of the king's soldiers. Edred incensed at the insult thus offered, and the injury thus done to him, determined upon instantly retracing his steps, and utterly destroying the whole of the country. The instant the Northumbrians were apprised that such was the determi-

---

* Wolstan, *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, c. ii. § 12, p. 91, abridged.

† Ibid., § 13. *Act. Sanct.*, (August), vo. i. p. 91.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*, ad an. 948.

§ F. Wigorn, ad an. 950, p. 604

nation of the king, they were stricken with great fear—they abjured the person, Eric, whom they had themselves elected as king—they sought to recompense for the insult they had offered, by the tender of fresh honors to Edred—to repair his losses by immense gifts, and to make amends for their offences, by the presentation of a large sum of money.*

It was in the second year of the reign of Edred, and when the Northumbrians had risen in rebellion against their sovereign, and threatened to have Eric as their king, and Wulstan the archbishop of York was noted to have given a willing and efficient aid to the insurgents, that the illustrious Edred despatched his chancellor to the northern parts of the kingdom.†

The venerable chancellor—Turketul—proceeded on the royal mission attended by an immense escort of horsemen; for not only was he ennobled by the royal blood which flowed in his veins, but he was also the possessor of immense wealth, being the owner of not less than forty manors. Divine grace so disposed his journey that, in travelling to York, his road should be through the monastery of Croyland. He was about to pass onward when

---

* F. Wigorn, p. 604. See *Sax. Chron.*, a. 948. *Chron. Mailros*, a. 950, p. 148. Rog. de Wend., vol. i. pp. 401, 402.

† Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 30. To avoid repetition immaterial portions of sentences are omitted in this extract. Those who may not have Gale's edition of the "Rerum Anglicarum Scriptorum Veterum," vol. i. are referred to the "Scriptores Post Bedam," p. 872, et sequent.

the three venerable old men of the monastery met him; and as the shades of evening were beginning to fall, they earnestly supplicated that he would enter the monastery, and by their entreaties, it might be said, forced him to do so. They first conducted him, for the purposes of prayer, to the little oratory which they had constructed in one corner of the ruined church. They there shewed him the relics of the holy confessor Guthlac, and fully detailed to him the entire account of how their present desolation had come upon them. He felt an unutterable pity for them, and heard them with a thoroughly devout attention.

The old men then received with great humility this noble stranger in their guest-room—all the victuals that they had, however poor in quality, and insufficient in quantity, and however unfitted to be tasted by him, or incapable of supplying the wants of his immense number of attendants, they tendered with a generous spirit to his servants and cooks to be prepared for supper. They were anxious to give not merely in accordance with their means, but even beyond their means, in order that they might content and afford satisfaction to their pious guest, and excite his benevolence towards them, so that he might deign to use his powerful influence with the king, and intercede with his majesty for the re-edification of a monastery, which the king's relative the renowned Athelstan intended, if life had been spared to him, to have restored; or, failing in this, that Turketul might, for his soul's sake, bestow out of his charity some benefit upon them.

The venerable chancellor felt extreme compassion for the misery of so great a monastery. He cherished in his very heart the courtesy of these old men; he gave a willing assent to their prayers; declared he would take upon himself

the duties of their advocate, and promised, upon his return, to afford them some assistance out of his own private property.

At an early hour the next morning he quitted the monastery, giving directions to his servants, that they should leave the old men a sufficiency of provisions until his return, and also, for a supply of their other indispensable wants, the sum of one hundred shillings. At length, bathed in tears, he bade them farewell, and commended himself to their prayers.

From that day forward, and ever after, his heart cleaved to these old men, and Croyland monastery was cherished by him as if with a deep and personal love; so much so, that during the entire of that journey, whether on the high way, or the bye-path, wherever he was, or with whomsoever he was speaking, his entire conversation was about these old men—expatiating on their gentleness and humanity; extolling their holiness, proclaiming their charity, deploring their calamity. It was from him, and at that time that Croyland then first obtained the cognomen of "*Curtesy.*"

The venerable Turketul arrived at York, discharged the commission entrusted to him by the king, both as regarded the archbishop, and the citizens, with such diligence and care, that he was able to attain with perfect success the object for which he had been sent.*

Upon his return home, Turketul with all his followers

---

* This probably alludes to the entire submission made by the Northumbrians, and their tender of tribute and treasure to soothe the excited anger of Edred as described by the *Saxon Chronicle* and Florence of Worcester. See pp. 464, 474, of this volume.

repaired to Croyland, and again sought the hospitable reception of the old men. He was most joyfully welcomed by them; and again was he relieved out of their scanty means; whilst he, on the other hand, proclaimed to them that the hand of the Lord should be ever prompt and powerful in their aid, and that the Divine assistance should be theirs for the future. Bestowing twenty pounds in silver upon the old men, he returned at an early hour in the morning to his royal master.

As soon as he had apprised the king of the reply which he brought from the archbishop of York, and from the inhabitants of that city, he invoked the aid of the Holy Ghost, and then wisely and discreetly introduced into his discourse a description of the ruin into which Croyland monastery had fallen, and his project of having it restored.

No sooner had the chancellor and principal councillor of the king made known this matter to his sovereign, than the latter voluntarily assented to it; and he even added that no sooner was the desperate war which was then on his hands through the mercy of Heaven, well and happily disposed of, than that he, who might then hope to have time to attend to such acts of piety, would, to the utmost of his ability, promote the welfare of the church of Christ in all parts of his kingdom.

To these observations the chancellor thus replied:—

"Sir, your predecessors, my lords, and your brothers, "were both most valiant kings, and were in their days "the doers of good works tending to the honour of God "and the exaltation of our holy mother the Church, and "the Lord, our God, who is a most just judge did, as a "reward for all such good works, give them the vic-"tory over all their enemies, and made them abound

"with blessings of every kind. Thus also do you--and "rely upon what I say—by such meritorious works you "may obtain a recompense from God; and so, being pro- "tected by the prayers of the saints, and aided by the "favour of heaven, you can with a safe conscience, pro- "ceed with your wars."

These sentiments, and sentiments like to these were frequently given utterance to by the venerable chancellor in friendly conversation with the king, and had, at last, the effect of inducing his majesty to address Turketul in the words of the Evangelist "Habete vos custodiam—take you "yourself the charge of these old men, and of that place, "for my hand shall aid you in all that you may require, "and assist you, in whatever you can need."

Turketul received these words as if they had been the utterance of a divine oracle, and as if they had emanated from the sanctuary of the Holy Ghost; and so understanding the words of the Gospel he then on the instant, made an open declaration of his determination to become a monk, and devoutly requested the royal approbation of the resolution he had come to.

The king was immeasureably astonished upon hearing Turketul say he had formed any such determination, and sought by every reason that suggested itself to his mind to dissuade the chancellor from carrying it into effect—representing to him, that he was now a person who had arrived at a very advanced age, had all his life been nurtured with care, and had fared sumptuously, and who would never therefore be able to bear the austerities of monastic discipline to which he was utterly unaccustomed: and besides this, the king remarked that the nation was at that moment exposed to very great dangers; that the hope

of averting these might be said to hang upon the wisdom and sagacity of Turketul himself; and that if these were now withdrawn, apprehensions for the safety and permanency of the monarchy might be justly entertained.

To such objections the chancellor made this answer:—

"My lord the king, God who knows every thing, knows "well with what fidelity I have discharged my duties as a "loyal subject—a loyalty which I admit was due—to my "lords, your brothers, and to yourself. For them and for "you I have battled with all my strength; and now for "your soul's sake I beseech of your goodness to permit "me, in my old age, to battle for myself. As to my "advice, or whatever aid my insignificance can afford to "you, as long as the spirit of life is associated with this "poor body, you can command me, whatever may be the "affairs in which you are engaged; with the exception of "deeds of arms, in which my weak hand is no longer fitted "nor capable to bear a part."

This pious king was greatly grieved on hearing these words. He perceived that the holy desire expressed by Turketul daily acquired strength, and fearing that opposition might destroy this pious soul;—for Edred was a monarch remarkable for a conscience which excelled in purity that of all his predecessors;—he, one day called Turketul into his private chamber, and there throwing himself at the feet of him, who was his own subject, he with tears supplicated and adjured the chancellor that he should not abandon his king in times of tribulation and perplexity.

The chancellor seeing his lord and master, the king, in fact, of all England, on the earth, and at his feet, cast himself upon the ground, and kneeling, besought of his

sovereign to have pity upon him. With deep sighs, with loud sobs, and with abundant tears he entreated Edred to accede to his wish, and he even besought that he would do so as he venerated St. Paul, a saint to whom the king had a special devotion.* Thus praying, and thus adjuring his sovereign, he at last obtained the assent for which he had so long sought in vain.

Both rose from the ground. They appointed a day on which they should go to Croyland together, and when the holy vow might be carried into effect, in a manner the most befitting, and the most becoming for a chancellor to make, and his sovereign to sanction.

Only a few days had elapsed from the time that the king had given his assent to Turketul's becoming a monk, when the venerable chancellor caused a proclamation to be made by the mouth of a herald through the streets of London, that if any person considered that any thing was due to him, the chancellor was prepared on a certain day, at a certain place, to pay that person the full amount of whatever he claimed; and it was moreover declared, that if at any time he had done any injury to any person, he promised to pay a compensation to treble the amount of the damage he might have done—thus acting like another Zaccheus, satisfying every exigency of justice, and indemnifying, beyond the amount which human tribunals would accord, every damage that had been inflicted.

When all creditors and claimants had been satisfied, he bestowed upon the king his lord, his sixty manors—reserving, however, in perpetuity, every tenth manor for his

---

* "—— Per sanctum Paulum, cui Rex specialem devotionem semper habebat."

Lord Jesus Christ. Of the sixty manors he possessed, he reserved six—these were the manors most closely adjoining to Croyland; viz. Wendlingborough, Elmyngton, Worthorp, Rotenham, Hokyngton, and Beby. All the rest were given by him to the king.*

It was upon the vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary that the king and Turketul arrived at Croyland, and messengers were instantly sent, in the king's name, to Winchester and Malmsbury, for the two monks, Bruno and Aio. As soon as they heard that the Lord of Heaven had been pleased to look down upon Croyland, they rejoiced exceedingly; and returning in all speed, they re-entered the monastery on the vigil of the blessed Bartholomew, their patron, and were received with great joy by their brethren. Both of these monks were very learned men,† and as edifying by their exterior manners as by the sincerity of their piety.

The following morning, that is, upon the feast of the holy Apostle, the venerable Turketul laid aside his dress as a layman, received the habit of a monk, and was enrolled as a brother by the five old men. He was then presented

* In thus stripping himself of all his worldly wealth, Turketul resembled St. Dunstan; but differed from him in the appropriation of that wealth: for all that the latter inherited from his parents, as well as the large possessions bestowed upon him by the royal Saint Elgiva, he applied to the founding of monasteries. "Dunstanus cum de illius tum etiam de sui ipsius patrimonio solicitus (nam uterque parens obierat, nec præter ejus alium heredem reliquerat) primo quidem eamden Ecclesiam vicinioribus terris, quæ in omni patrimonio erant, muneravit: ceteras vero *fundantis quinque monasteriis*, pro situ terrarum ab invicem sejunctis, reservavit." OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 3, § 17. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 364.

† "Ambo viri literatissimi." INGULPHUS.

with the pastoral staff by the king, and the benediction, according to ecclesiastical custom, bestowed upon him by his diocesan, Ceolwulf, the bishop of Dorchester, who was present on the occasion.

The same day, in accordance with the pleasure of the king, and in pursuance of the advice of those best skilled in the law, in order that the monastery might be the better secured for the future against the violent assaults of wicked men, the venerable abbot Turketul, and the before-mentioned five old monks, voluntarily, completely, and absolutely resigned into the hands of the king their entire monastery, with all the lands, tenements, goods, and chattels belonging to it. All these were placed at the absolute disposal of the king; and he, on the succeeding day, brought to the place carpenters and masons, over whom he appointed as superintendent a certain clerk, named Egilric, a relative of his own, and the cousin of Turketul. Egilric was charged with the care of the workmen, and the entire place; the expense of maintaining the works was defrayed out of the royal revenues; the wood and the stones were supplied in abundance from the adjoining forests and quarries in the king's manor of Castor. This undertaking was proceeded with so heartily and so diligently by Egilric, that in a short time a church was built, cloisters and other necessary edifices erected by him, so that he deservedly obtained thanks from his king, and a blessing from Heaven.

No sooner, however, had the king assigned to the several workmen the various tasks which it was expected they should perform, and made the before-mentioned faithful clerk superintendent of the workmen, than he took with

himself to London, (where was to be held a witan for discussing the public affairs of the kingdom) the venerable abbot Turketul, with his two senior monks, namely, Turgot and Aio.*

At the witan held in London, and in presence of the archbishops, bishops, and the great men of the entire country, the monastery of Croyland, with all its lands, as well those which had formerly belonged to it as those which had been lately given or acquired for it,† were restored by Edred to the abbot Turketul and his monks; and the king

---

* INGULPHUS, *Hist.* pp. 30, 31, 32. (Gale) pp. 872, 873 (Script. Post Bedam).

† Ingulphus gives in detail the exertions made by Turketul to recover for Croyland monastery the lands which had been unjustly taken from it. In all these cases specified by Ingulphus, but one, Turketul had to pay large sums of money to get back the lands. In others he failed—and one of those failures is deserving of particular mention. The king's favourite, the chancellor and the destined abbot of Croyland, was the claimant for lands which, there could be no doubt, had formerly been unjustly taken from Croyland. The holders of the lands were two old, helpless, friendless women, but who obstinately refused either to accept any price for the lands, or for prayers or entreaties to part with them—and the consequence was, that to the time of their death they retained undisturbed possession of them, and, it may be inferred, bequeathed them away from the church. When "the tyranny of churchmen," and "the despotism of the Roman Catholic church," are descanted upon, such facts as these should be borne in mind, as the best response to be offered to vague assertions.

"*Depyng* vero cum Langferus quondam regis Beorredi panetarius, cui dictus rex dictum manerium aliquando donaverat, jam longævo senio gravatus obierat nullo hærede masculino relicto, ad duas filias ejus transibat; quæ diu in celibatu permanentes, neque cum Turketulo, voluerunt componere, nec juri suo prece vel pretio renuntiare. Expectabat itaque diutius venerabilis pater Turketulus tempora meliora: sed quamdiu vixit, vixerunt et illæ in eadem pertinacia." INGULPHUS, p. 39, (Gale). See p. 25.

by his charter* declared it to be his free and charitable gift, and to be enfranchised from every species of temporal servitude. Turketul, however, would not consent to the acquisition of the ancient impunity and immunity attachable to the place, lest it should seem to afford a refuge to wicked and impious men, and lest he should, contrary to his conscientious feelings, harbour or screen those who were malefactors.

Turketul was followed to the monastery by many learned men. Ten of these assumed with him the monastic habit. The others, unable to bear the rigours of the life of a religious, retained the secular habiliments, but still dwelt in the monastery, because they could not endure to live away from him.†

In the year 949, Anlaf Curran arrived at the land of the Northumbrians.‡

---

* The charter is given at full length by Ingulphus. The only portion we deem it necessary to transcribe is the following clause, securing to the "men" of Croyland the benefit of being restored to their rightful lords—the monks of Croyland. "Et præcipio, quod omnes homines fugitivos, quos iidem monachi, per testimonium quatuor vel quinque hominum fide dignorum coram vicecomite in patria, in qua tales manent, possunt affidare suos nativos esse, reducantur per prædictum Vicecomitem in Abbathiam eorum, cum omnibus catallis et sequelis eorum, omni reclamatione et reluctatione abinde remota et annullata." *Hist.* p. 35, (Gale) p. 875, (Script. Post Bedam.)

† Ingulphus, *Hist.* pp. 39, 40. (Gale) p. 879. (Script. Post. Bedam.)

‡ *Sax. Chron.* This person "appears to be identical with the Amlaf Cuarran mentioned in the annals of Ulster, aa. 944, 946. Gaimar (v. 3549, sq.) mentions Anlaf Curran:

The same year—that is, in the year of our Lord, 949, and two hundred and forty years from the period of the death of Saint Aldhelm, his sacred body was taken out of the earth, and with all due and fitting honours placed in a shrine.*

" 'Quant il regnout el secund an Norhumberlant seisi e prist,
Idunckes vint Anlaf Quiran. Ne trovat ki li defendist.'

" According to Olaf Tryggvason's Saga (bd. i. p. 149), he was king of Dublin. See also F. Wigorn; Sim. Dunelm, aa. 948, 950; H. Hunt. a. 949." THORPE, notes to LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 125.

* CAPGRAVE, Vit. Aldhelm, as quoted by Alford, vol. iii. p. 298, § 4. " His translation was kept on the 31st March; but his feast on the 25th May." *Britannia Sancta*, vol. i. p. 315. See BUTLER'S *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v. p. 668, and vol. i. pp. 516, 523, of this work.

In the year 949, it is stated by Frodoard, that English ambassadors visited king Otho at Aix-la-Chapelle. See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. viii. p. 205 *c.*

Upon this fact the following observation is made by Lappenberg;

" At the Easter festival of 949, Eadred's envoys are mentioned as present at the court of his brother-in-law, the emperor Otho, at Aix-la-Chapelle. Of the object of their mission we are uninformed." Vol. ii. p. 128, note 1.

The object, we think, may be easily surmised. It was to offer their condolence on the death of the empress Edgiva, the half-sister of the English king, which occurred in the year 947. See *Continuator Regionis*, ad an. 947; or combined with that visit of ceremony, might be the tender of aid to the emperor, in restoring Louis d'Outremer to his full powers as king. See RICHER, lib. ii. c. 86. Considering, too, the pious character of Edred, and the important matters that had been discussed and determined the preceding year at Engleheim, there was in these alone sufficient cause to induce Edred to send ambassadors to Otho, in order that he might be fully apprized of all that had been done. We must remember that amongst the abuses then beginning to attract attention, and with regard to which decrees were passed and remedies proposed, were: " De incestis et illicitis presbiterorum conjugiis, de presbiteris quoque eucharistiam indigne tractantibus, de æcclesiis etiam a laicis indebite usurpatis; aliaque nonnulla ibi prolata fuere, quæ diligentissime investigata, atque utiliter diffinita sunt." RICHER, lib. ii. c. 81.

In the year 951, and on St. Gregory's mass-day, died Elphegus, bishop of Winchester.* This was Elphegus the bald, who had induced St. Dunstan to become a monk, and subsequently bestowed upon him the order of the priesthood.†

The king, deeming this to be a fitting opportunity for manifesting his desire that fitting honours should be bestowed upon St. Dunstan, endeavoured to persuade him that he should take upon himself the care of the diocese, which had thus been deprived of its pastor.‡ When he perceived that all his entreaties could not influence the mind of Dunstan, he applied to his mother, Edgiva, in the hope that she might be able to persuade the abbot to accept of the bishopric.

"I know," said Edric, "dearest mother, and queen of "the broad empire of the English, that our mutual friend, "Dunstan, loves you the most of living beings, and that "he takes an especial delight in the good works that you "do; because whatever he counsels you for the sake of "eternal life to perform, that you are sure willingly to "accomplish, whether it be in giving alms for the subsis- "tence of the poor, or in the bestowal of donations for the "advancement of churches.§ Therefore is it, that I have "a confident hope, that if you beseech him to do that

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. WIGORN, p. 604.

‡ OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 5, § 25, *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 366.

§ "Sive id esset in sustentatione pauperum, sive in muneratione ecclesiarum." *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. 5, § 25. See Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. i. § 11, *Act. Sanct.* (August) vol. i. p. 91, B. *Evident. Eccles. Cantuar.* p. 2221.

"which it is becoming in me to ask, and in him to perform, "he cannot justly refuse a compliance with your request. "It is a thing perfectly manifest to all persons, that he "ought to hold the very highest rank in the priesthood. "This is as plain to us, as that we are his inferiors in wis- "dom, and in all that duly merits honour and respect in "this life, as we are sure that he who is king of the English "is a more powerful monarch than any of the other kings "of the earth. Address him then with that winning elo- "quence which belongs to women—struggle in order that "the grace which you have obtained in his eyes, may ob- "tain from the servant of God a compliance which cannot "but tend to aid in releasing us from the bonds of sin."

The queen-mother, in obedience to the words of her son, invited Dunstan to come to her, and sought by her arguments, to induce him to relax in his resolution; but he, on this occasion, fully justified the etymology of his name,* for he was as unshaken as a deeply-rooted rocky mountain. "I am unwilling," said he, "lady, that thou "shouldst ask of me aught, that it would hurt my con- "scientious feelings to concede, or, the refusal to concede "which may give offence to thee. I am not ignorant how "difficult it is for each of us to plead his cause before "the tribunal of Christ, much less, how difficult it will "be for a man to obtain an acquittal in those cases, in "which he has acted as the adviser or the judge of "others. If, however, these considerations cannot produce

* "Dunstanus quod petræ firmitatem sonat." OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. i. § 3. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 360. "Sanè antiqua Saxonum lingua *Dun* montem, *stan* lapidem, seu petram significat." WHARTON, *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 103.

" any impression upon thy mind, I would desire to add " another, and such as may be esteemed as that which " mainly must prevent me from receiving a bishopric. I " see that my lord the king, suffers under a constant lan- " guor, that his life is endangered by it, that he cannot " endure to be parted from me for a moment, because he " has made me, as if the father of a sovereign, and the " master of an entire kingdom."

As the queen-mother still persisted in urging him to accept the mitre, notwithstanding his repeated refusals, he, somewhat agitated, said to her, " Most assuredly, the " episcopal mitre shall never cover my brows in the days " of this thy son."

From this conversation, Dunstan departed with his mind much agitated. He sought his couch, and there, whilst engaged in solemn and deep reflections, he was overtaken by sleep, when lo! he saw before him the princes of the kingdom of God, and the judges of this world—the venerable Apostles of Christ, Peter and Paul, and Saint Andrew, who appeared as if they met him departing from the city of Rome, and overtook him at the Vatican hill. He seemed to be graciously saluted by them, and there appeared to be in the hands of each a glittering sword, which were all graciously presented to him. Upon the swords thus held before him, he read, on that grasped by St. Peter, these words, which were inscribed in letters of gold, " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word " was with God, and the Word was God." On the other swords were merely the names of their respective bearers, " Paul," in the hands of St. Paul; " Andrew," in the hands of St. Andrew. Meanwhile, he remarked that St. Andrew

looked upon him with a pleased countenance,* and addressed him in the words of the Gospel: "Take up my "yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and "humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls." He then received from St. Peter a slight blow of his staff, who said to him: "Be this the punishment for the re-"jected bishopric, and as a sign to you, that you are not "to refuse again a bishop's mitre."

With the touch of the pastoral staff, he awoke from his sleep, and instantly comprehended that a divine visitation had been bestowed upon him; and he gave thanks to God, that he had been so honoured.†

Early on the following morning, he narrated to the king that which he had seen, and Edred astonished at what he heard, gave to it this explanation. "By the arms "of the apostle, is expressed the power of bestowing the "episcopal blessing, and you should now be aware that "you have been censured for refusing the yoke of the "Lord. But, since you have seen on the sword of St. "Peter, the inscription: 'In the beginning was the Word,' "that is, the Word of God is the only begotten Son of

* St. Andrew had been adopted by St. Dunstan as his patron, and protector against the snares, and temptations of Satan: "adhibuit vitæ suæ patronum Andream Apostolum, &c." Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 4, § 22. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 365.

† The account of this vision is more briefly given by Brithferth. He states that St. Dunstan was struck by St. Andrew, for refusing the bishopric of Winchester, and then adds an incident, which shews that the abbot of Glastonbury slept in the same dormitory with the monks. "Statimque expergefactus post dictum, requisivit *cubantem coram se monachum*, quis ipsum acri virgulæ ictu temere percussisset. At ille, nullus, inquam, *te quiescentem* aliquo percussionis tactu me sciente contigerat," c. 4, § 20. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 353.

"God, God always with God, as man is made for men, "and to be always with men, so should you plainly know, "that you are to be the future prince of that see, which "in Christ's name, is that of Canterbury, and that holds "the highest rank amongst all our churches."*

---

* Osbern, Vit. St. Dunstan, c. 5, § 25, 26, 27. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 366, 367. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 102, 103.

The refusal of Dunstan to accept the see of Winchester, the motive that influenced him in doing so, the vision with which he was visited, the narration of that vision, and the interpretation put upon it, all assuming to be founded mainly on the authority which we have translated in the text, are thus told by an Anti-Catholic author.

"From the next incident, the policy of Dunstan seems to have been foreseeing and refined. The see of Winchester was offered to him by the king; but he refused it, *on the pretence of unfitness.*"

There is not a single word in the original, to justify the words marked in italics!

"He," (Dunstan) "went home. In the morning, he told the "king he had seen a vision, in which Saint Peter struck him, and "said, 'This is your punishment for your refusal, and a token to "'you *not to decline hereafter the primacy of England.*'"

There is not a word in the original to justify the words here marked in italics. Osbern's word are these: "Hoc tibi sit et pœna abjecti, et signum ulterius non abjiciendi Pontificatus,"—*Pontificatus* not signifying "the archbishopric of Canterbury," but simply "a bishopric," as we may see in Brithferth's *Life of St. Dunstan*, where speaking of the vacant see of Winchester, he says "Ælfwoldus vir venerandus, ob pollentem venustatem, sortitus est ad *Pontificatum eundem*," c. 4, § 19, p. 353. See Ducange, in verb. *pontifex, pontificare, pontificatia.*

The Anti-Catholic author then having made his facts to suit his purpose, proceeds:—

"The king saw not *the art* of his friend, but interpreting the "vision to his wishes, declared that it foretold he was to be arch-"bishop of Canterbury."

For this statement, which we have divided into three parts, the Anti-Catholic author, Mr. Sharon Turner, boldly quotes "Osberne, 103. Adelard." That is, Osberne's *Life of St. Dunstan,*

in the *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 103, which is the same as that to be found in the Acta Sanctorum, translated in the text, whilst no particular passage in Adelard is mentioned.

Mr. Sharon Turner thus comments on *his version of the Acts of St. Dunstan.*

"From an *impartial* (!) consideration of all *these circumstances*, "will it be injustice to the memory of Dunstan, to infer, that, as "by his refusal of the dignity of Winchester, by the communica- "tion of this vision, and from its result, he acquired the credit of "humility, of a divine communication, and a royal prediction of "the highest grandeur to which he could attain, he had these "objects in previous contemplation? If not, the coincidence "and complexion of the incidents are unlike the usual course of "accidental things. It need only be added, that Odo, who then "governed the see of Canterbury, was very old." TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. pp. 249, 250.

In plain language, Mr. Sharon Turner asserts, upon the authority of his own misinterpretation, and interpolation of the old writers, from whom he professes to derive his information, that St. Dunstan invented a sacrilegious lie, to induce King Edred to nominate him to the see of Canterbury, on the death of St. Odo—St. Odo being then in the enjoyment of health, and not dying until the year 958, (according to Florence of Worcester, Roger Hoveden, and Matthew of Westminster,) or so late as 961, (according to one copy of the Saxon Chronicle,) whilst Edred was always sickly; "per omne tempus imperii sui languens," (*Bridferth*, c. 4, § 20,) and when the principal reason alleged by Dunstan, for refusing the see of Winchester, was, that Edred's life was in constant danger from the sickness with which he was afflicted—"illa nimirum a suscipiendo episcopatu multum me cohiberet, quod Dominum Regem constanti video languore periclitari." (*Osbern*, c. 5, § 25.)

Mr. Sharon Turner affirms that St. Dunstan refused the see of Winchester, because he wished to have that of Canterbury, and "yet," as it is justly remarked by Dr. Lingard, "he, like most "of the archbishops of that period, might have been translated "to the metropolitical from an inferior see." *Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 274.

Thus the misinterpretation and interpolation of Mr. Sharon Turner, would go to prove that St. Dunstan was ambitious—so ambitious that he refused the see of Winchester, the acceptance of which could not have prevented him from being archbishop of Canterbury, (as it did not afterwards prevent him being archbishop, although previously bishop of Worcester,) and that he deliberately fabricated a sacrilegious falsehood, for the purpose of suggesting

The successor to Elphegus in the see of Winchester, was Elfsinus.*

In the year 952, king Edred ordered Wulstan, the archbishop of York, to be kept in close custody at Jedburgh, because that prelate was accused of many disloyal deeds.†

The same year a great many of the citizens of Thetford were put to death by king Edred, as a fitting vengeance for the murder of the abbot Aldelm, who had been unjustly slain by them.‡

In the year 953 died Ethelgar, the bishop of Crediton, having ruled over that see for the space of twenty-one years. In accordance with the advice of St. Dunstan,

---

his future promotion to a sickly king, who already confided to him the entire powers of the monarchy—"cum *me* tam sui patrem quam *totius regni dominum* ipse statuerit." (*Osbern*, c. 5, § 25. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 103.)

Such is a specimen of the manner in which Anti-Catholic writers have concocted a history of England!

* F. WIGORN, ad an. 951, p. 604. See W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. i. p. 201.

† F. WIGORN, a. 952, p. 604. See *Sax. Chron.*, as to expulsion of Anlaf, and reception of Eric, and ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. pp. 402, 403, as to the death of Eric, ad an. 950.

‡ F. WIGORN, a. 952, p. 604. See *Sax. Chron.* ALFORD in his *Annales Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, (vol. iii. p. 304,) erroneously states that William, the son of the emperor, who was elected archbishop of Mentz, in the year 954, (see *Continuator Regionis*, a. 954. PERTZ MONUMENT. *German Histor.*, vol. i. p. 654,) was also the son of St. Edgitha, the daughter of Edward the Elder, (see p. 304, § 2, 3, 4.) The mistake is corrected by Pagi. (See BARONIUS *cum critice Pagii*, vol. xvi. p. 82, note 1, and pp. 218, 219.

Alfwold, a venerable man, was entrusted with the bishopric.*

King Edred in the year 954 took upon himself the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians;† for the people of Northumbria could not endure the domination of a person of their own country. One of these—an individual named Eric, the son of Harold—had been as lightly chosen their ruler by them, as after a reign of three years he was as lightly rejected, and they of their own accord voluntarily submitted to Edred, and restored him to the throne.‡

The same year archbishop Wulstan was released from custody and appointed to the see of Dorchester;§ and Osketel, a virtuous man, and thoroughly learned in ecclesiastical matters, was made archbishop of York.‖

---

* F. Wigorn, a. 953, p. 604. See R. de Wendov., vol. i. p. 403. This fact is introduced as showing the power possessed by St. Dunstan during the reign of Edred, and as corroborative of the declaration that he had made to the queen-mother, that he would never accept the episcopal mitre during the life time of that king —"in diebus filii tui, pontificali infula me non esse sublimandum." Osbern, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 5, § 25. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 367.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ H. Hunt., p. 355. See as to the appointment of earls of Northumberland, R. Hoveden, pp. 423, 424.

§ F. Wigorn, p. 604.

‖ Rog. de Wendov., vol. i, p. 403.

On St. Clement's mass-day, and in the year 955, king Edred died at Frome.* This king, the beloved of St. Dunstan, during the entire of his reign, was oppressed by a heavy sickness, so that he sustained life by the absorption of the juices of the meat he chewed, being incapable of swallowing any solid substance.† * * * When he saw, that in consequence of this long endured illness, that his life was in imminent danger, he desired that all his riches and treasures should be collected together and brought to him, so that he might, whilst living, make a free gift of them, and dictate how they should be disposed of. For this reason, the man of God, Dunstan, as well as the other keepers of the royal treasures, to whom for safety-sake they had been confided, left the king to bring back to his majesty whatever was under their care After the lapse of a few days, Dunstan was on his return to Edred, with the royal treasures carefully packed together, when, on a sudden, a voice was heard from Heaven, saying to him—"Lo! Edred the king dieth now in peace." And on the instant the horse, on which Dunstan was riding, as if it had been stricken, fell to the earth and expired,—for it was unable to bear the presence of a sublime angel. Upon Dunstan's arrival at the palace, he discovered that the very moment at which the angelic announcement was made to him on the road, was precisely the moment when king Edred expired.‡

---

* *Sax. Chron.* "In pace migrat in natalitia *beati Papæ* Clementis et martyris." ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. 7, p. 849.

† BRIDFERTH, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 4, § 20. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 353. A few lines are here omitted which do not affect the sense of the passage rendered in the text.

‡ BRIDFERTH, Vit. S. Dunsstan, c. 4, § 20, p. 353. The same

Edred was ever to be found at the feet of the saints. His entire life was devoted to God and St. Dunstan; and it was in accordance with the advice and admonitions of Dunstan that he learned how to bear with patience the constant racking tortures of his body, to be untiring in prayer, and finally to make his palace a perfect school of virtue. His death was an event which was a cause of grief of mortals, but of joy and exultation to angels.*

The remains of the king were carried to Winchester, and there interred with all due honors by St. Dunstan, in the old monastery.†

---

facts, but somewhat differently told, will be found in OSBERN, c. 5, § 28, p. 367, in *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. F. WIGORN, p. 604. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. pp. 403, 404. S. DUNELM, p. 156. ETHELRED, p. 358. BROMTON, p. 862.

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii, § 146.

† F. WIGORN, p. 604. See *Sax. Chron.* The Will made by this pious monarch has been preserved. It proves both his charity and his religion. In it he bequeaths, 1st, funds for monasteries; 2nd, donations for the poor; and 3rd, sums to be paid those priests who offered up masses for the repose of his soul.

1. "Etiam legat veteri monasterio Wintoniæ tres villas, &c. Præterea ipse annuit novo monasterio Wintoniæ tres villas, &c.

"Insuper annuit monasterio monalium Wintoniæ tres villas, &c.

"Etiam legat monasterio monalium apud Cestria * * et monasterio monalium Septoniæ, &c.

2. "Præterea ipse concedit, pro remedio pœnarum suarum, propriæque animæ salute, ac ejusdem post mortem misericordissima Dei remuneratione, pauperibus et egenti populo mille et sex centas libras; ea intentione, ut a siti reserventur et fame.

"—— Sedi Wintoniensis præter priores quadragintas libras, lego ducentas libras, distribuendas inter pauperes et inopes in quocumque comitatu numerosius abundaverint.

"Insuper, volo, quod mihi servientes, duodecim eligant homines pauperes istius civitatis; et distribuant eis de meis bonis quamdiu vixerint.

3. "Et omnibus Missam pie celebrantibus, quos disposui et

ordinavi, ad deprecandum pro me, quinquaginta mancusas auri, &c." *Annales de Hida*, as quoted by ALFORD, vol. iii. pp. 305, 306, § 2, 6. As to this king's magnificent donations to churches, see *Vit. S. Ethelwold*, c. i. § 10. *Act. Sanct.* (August,) vol. i. pp. 90, 91. *Evident. Eccles. Cantuar.*, p. 2220. Annales Ecclesi Wintoniensis in *Ang. Sac.*, vol. i. p. 289. DUGDALE's *Monasticon*, vol. i. pp. 1, 4, 49, 51, 58, 96, vol. ii. pp. 92, 114, 427.

CHAPTER VIII.

EDWY.

Accession of Edwy.. his vices and hypocrisy.. his indecent conduct on the day of his coronation.. the noble and Christian bravery of St. Dunstan. The wicked Ædelgyw.. her persecution of Dunstan.. his property confiscated.. he is expelled from his monastery.. and seeks refuge in Flanders. An attempt made to assassinate him. Persecution of the monastic orders by Edwy.. of the poor.. of the Queen mother. The archbishop Odo opposes himself to the proceedings of the king.. has Ædelgyw arrested and transported to Ireland. Popular insurrection against Edwy.. his deposition determined upon for his manifold crimes and misdemeanours. Ædelgyw arrested in Gloucester and punished as an infamous woman. The Mercians and Northumbrians withdraw their allegiance from Edwy, and elect his brother Edgar as their king. St. Dunstan recalled to England by Edgar, made bishop of Worcester, and also bishop of London. Sentence of divorce pronounced by Odo, between

king Edwy, and the queen Elfgiva. Death of archbishop "Odo the good." Elffinus the bishop of Winchester practices simony, and is nominated archbishop of Canterbury. Elffinus at the tomb of St. Odo. The vision of St. Odo. . his prediction as to the fate of Elffinus. . the prediction fulfilled. Repentance and death of king Edwy.

CHAPTER VIII.

EDWY.

A. D. 955—959.

EDWY, the son of king Edmund, and of the queen Elgiva, succeeded to the government of the West Saxons, in the year 955;* and was consecrated at Kingston by Odo, archbishop of Canterbury.†

Edwy, on account of his extreme personal beauty, had obtained the designation of the fair.‡ He was young, when he ascended the throne, not only in years, but also boyish in manners; he associated with the young, and he acted upon their suggestions; whilst the counsels of the sage, and the warnings of those who were worthy of veneration on account of their years, their virtues, their services, and

---

* *Sax. Chron.*

† F. WIGORN, p. 604.

‡ "Qui et præ nimia etenim pulchritudine *Pancali* sortitus est nomen a vulgo secundi." ETHELWERD, lib. iv. c. viii, p. 849.

their rank, were treated by him with contempt. For this he was reproved by the valiant soldier of Christ, Odo, and hence, fearing that the archbishop might postpone longer than he desired, the bestowing upon him the benediction of royal consecration, he restrained his inclinations for a brief period. No sooner however did the archiepiscopal consecration place him in the full possession of sovereign power, than he gave loose to his desires, and followed all the impulses of his heart.*

Court was made to the young king by a silly woman of high rank, who, in the desire that a marriage might be contracted either with herself or her grown up daughter, did not shrink from sacrificing her virtue as well as that of her own child.† Nature shrinks from dwelling upon the abominations of this frightful transaction. At length, upon the day fixed for Edwy's consecration, and when he was surrounded by all the nobles and great men of his kingdom, when his brows were still bedewed by the holy unguent poured upon him as a monarch, and that the joyous royal banquet was held, and the words of his faithful councillors were addressed to him, he gave way to his impetuous passions, suddenly quitted the august assembly to associate with those who were regardless even of the appearance of virtue.

The primate Odo, upon observing this indecency of conduct in the king upon the day of his consecration,

---

* *Vit. S. Odo*, c. ii. § 32. *Act. Sanct.*, (Julii), vol. ii. p. 71. See BRITHFRITH. *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. iv. § 21. OSBERN, c. vi. § 29. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. pp. 353, 367, 368.

† BRITHFRITH, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. 4 § 21. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 353. See BROMTON, p. 863.

and marking what deep displeasure it gave to the entire witan, addressed these words to his brother bishops, and the chief men of the court. "Let those whose "duty it is to be the personal attendants of the sove- "reign at once follow him, and induce him to do that "which is beseeming on an occasion like the present—that "is to appear as a pleased participator at the royal ban- "quet."

Those to whom such words were addressed, fearful either of incurring the anger of the king, or the resentment of his female associates, severally shrunk from acting on the suggestion of the archbishop. At length, there was selected out of the entire, two whose firmness and resolution were well known, viz., the abbot Dunstan, and a relation of his the bishop Cynegius.* These were commanded by all present to bring the king, whether willing or unwilling, back to the seat he had forsaken.

In conformity with the orders of the witan,† Dunstan and Cynegius proceeded on their mission. They found the royal crown composed of gold and silver, and rich with the radiant splendour of its various coloured gems cast from the king's head, and lying, as if it were a despised thing, carelessly on the floor, whilst the sovereign

---

* The individual who is here called Cynegius, is designated Kinsinus by Osbert, in the life of St. Dunstan, as published by Surius. He was bishop of Litchfield from 948 to 966. BAERTIUS, *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 354, note *g*.

† "Et ingressi juxta principum suorum jussa." BRITHFRITH. "Pari ac communi omnium voto Dunstanus compellatur." OSBERN, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. vi. § 31. "Missus est ab archiepiscopo et primoribus * * * venerabilis abbas Dunstanus." *Vit. S. Odo*, c. 2. § 33.

himself was discovered in a position, which proved that the instincts of the foulest beast were stronger in his nature, than the decency and modesty of a man. "All our "nobles and princes," said they to Edwy, "have sent us "to beseech of you, that you will deign to honour them "with your presence, and that you will not shew con- "tempt for your nobles by refusing to participate in a "banquet, that is in honour of an event for which you "should exhibit the greatest joy and satisfaction."

Dunstan having first rebuked the two women for their indecency, then with his own hand raised up the king, from the couch on which he was reposing, and which he shewed a disinclination to leave. He also replaced the crown on the king's head, and brought him back to the royal banquet, although in doing so, he had to tear Edwy by force from the females, who struggled to retain him in their society.

Whilst Dunstan was thus engaged, Ædelgyw, for such was the name of the infamous woman, turned upon the venerable abbot her eyes, and exclaimed, "how immea- "sureable must be the audacity of this man, who has "thus ventured to intrude himself upon the privacy of a "king!* You," said she to Dunstan, "have threatened me "with death by strangulation, but I shall have you doomed "to the mutilation of your limbs and to perpetual banish- "ment."†

---

* Brithfrith, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. iv. § 21, 22. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 353.

† Osbern, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. vi. § 31. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 368.

In adopting as closely as a respect for youthful and female eyes

We know from the Book of Kings, how Jezebel, saturated with the errors of paganism, and the poisons of

---

would permit, the account given by the most ancient authority—Brithfrith—of the horrid vices of Edwy and his impure associates, we wished to place before the reader a very important incident in the life of St. Dunstan, and one for which he is much censured by modern authors. The following is a specimen of the manner in which these authors describe the events that occurred in England, before the Norman invasion. The reader will remark that the annexed passage is taken from what professes to be "a Life of St. Dunstan."

"But Edred filled the throne only nine years, and was succeeded by Edwy at the early age of seventeen years, who is said to have been endowed with every grace of form, and the utmost firmness and intrepidity of spirit. Dunstan immediately conceived a jealousy of these qualities, and took an early opportunity to endeavour to disarm them. Edwy entertained a passion for a princess of the royal house, and even proceeded to marry her, though within the degrees forbidden by the canon law. The rest of the story exhibits a lively picture of the manners of these barbarous times. Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, the obedient tool of Dunstan, on the day of the coronation obtruded himself with his abettor into the private apartment to which the king had retired with his queen, only accompanied by her mother; and here the ambitious abbot, after loading Edwy with the bitterest reproaches, for his shameless sensuality, thrust him back by main force into the hall, where the nobles of the kingdom were still engaged at their banquet." W. GODWIN, *Lives of the Necromancers*, pp. 226, 227.

The observations of the Rév. Dr. Lingard on this subject are well deserving of quotation for more than one reason.

"By the language of modern prejudice, the share which Dunstan bore in this transaction, has been magnified into an attempt to subdue the spirit of Edwy, and a daring insult to the royal authority; but let the reader advert to the manners of the age, and he will not be surprised, if the witan resented the abrupt departure of the king, or their messengers treated with little ceremony the women who had drawn him away."

On this passage the annexed note is given by the reverend author.

"In support of this statement I have to contend against Carte, who has brought into the field a formidable auxiliary, William of Malmsbury. But if I can divest the monk of his modern armour,

malignity, raged with the fell spirit of an untiring persecution against the prophets of the Lord, and pursued them even unto death.* So it was with the shameless virago, Ædelgyw ; for from that day forth, she who was unworthy to be styled a woman and a Christian, was filled with the venomous rancour of a Jezebel, and never rested from persecuting by her inimical suggestions the man of God, Dunstan, until at length, availing herself of the encreasing hatred of the king against him, she was able to accomplish the pestiferous designs of her accursed will. She, with the king's consent, was constituted the mistress of all the property, and title deeds belonging to the community of Dunstan, as well as of his personal property; whilst

---

his efforts will be harmless. Let the reader compare the Latin original with Carte's English translation. The novel and ambiguous expression, proxime cognatam invadens uxorem, ejus formæ (vel forma) deperibat, Carte boldly renders, "the king had married a wife nearly related to him:" the decisive line, prorupit in triclinium in complexum *ganeæ* devolutus, is softened into an innocent visit, "to the *queen's* apartment;" *lascivientem* juvenem means no more than "playing at romps with his *wife and her mother*:" and *pellicem* repudiare is improved into a "divorce from his *wife*" (Carte, vol. i., p. 325.) Hume condescended to echo the opinions of this historian; Henry inherited his art of translation!" LINGARD'S *Anglo Saxon Antiquities*, vol. ii p. 275.

We purposely have abstained from a literal translation of the words used by Brithfrith and Osbern, to describe the abominable impurities of Edwy, and of those called by moderns "the queen," and "the queen's mother." Even slightly as we have ventured to refer to them, we must tender the apology made by Lampridius, in his account of Heliogabulus: "sed primum omnium ipse veniam peto quod hæc quæ apud diversos reperi, literis tradidi, quum multa improba reticuerim, et quæ ne dici quidem sine maximo pudore possunt. Ea vero quæ dixi prætextu verborum adhibito, quantum potui, texi." *Hist. August. Script.*, vol. i. pp. 877, 878.

* BRITHFRITH, *Vit. S. Dunstan*, c. 4, § 22. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 354.

instant banishment was decreed against himself by the king. The fury of a raging woman's wickedness did not stop there. It fell also upon Dunstan's disciples; those whom he had fed with the nectar-like doctrines of religion, were fraudulently involved in a common ban, which doomed them as participators in the crime of conspiracy. At the time that the persons sent to drive them from their monastery were superintending the inventory of the ecclesiastical goods and property subjected to confiscation,* there was heard on the western side of the church the harsh ringing laugh of a demon, which sounded like the wheezy voice of a gleesome hag. It was heard by St. Dunstan, and he responded to it, in these words:—"Foe to man-"kind, do not rejoice so much; for however great may be "the joy now in seeing my departure, thy grief will be "twice as great when God to thy confusion shall permit "me to return."

Thus, in accordance with the wicked will of a criminal female, was the pious Dunstan thrust from his monastery, and whichever of his friends, for charity or compassion sake subsequently afforded him shelter, was instantly subjected to the severe displeasure of an angry sovereign. This course of conduct compelled Dunstan to encounter a perilous passage through a stormy sea, and to seek in Flanders that uncertain hospitality which always awaits the unwilling exile. Scarcely had the rapid-sailing ves-

* This confiscation of the property of Glastonbury monastery, so like to what occurred in the reign of Henry VIII., was accompanied by the tears of the poor who were daily fed by St. Dunstan, "inter gemitus pauperum consuetis stipendiis per singulos dies ab illo recreatorum." OSBERN, c. 7, § 31. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 368.

sel on which he had embarked made from the shore a distance of three miles, when messengers from the iniquitous female plunderer of his monastery arrived at the beach in pursuit of him, and who were determined, it is said, to have torn out his eyes if they had found him there.

Dunstan passed the sea in safety; but it was to arrive in a country that was utterly strange to him, and of whose language and manners he was almost completely ignorant. The mercy of God went with him in his travels, and enabled him to find favour in the eyes of the individual, who was the sovereign of the country*—that princely personage guarding Dunstan with a father's tenderness during

* Arnoulf, count of Flanders. See F. WIGORN, p. 605. ROG. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 405. R. HOVEDEN, p. 405. Of the piety of this prince the following account is given by Flodoard, proving his respect for the relics of saints, his regard for monasteries, and his veneration for the Bible:

"Count Arnoulf came to Rheims, and bestowed upon the church of St. Mary an immense quantity of silver, with which the shrines containing the relics of S. S. Calistus, Nicasius, Eutropia, and other saints were covered and decorated. He also had a book of the Gospels richly adorned with gold and silver; and bestowed, in addition, gifts upon the monastery of St. Remy." See BARONIUS, vol. xvi. p. 105, ad an. 959, § 2, where an account will also be found (adopted from Surius, die 3, Oct.) of the miraculous cure of Arnoulf, through the prayers of St. Gerard—and his own fasting, faith, and pious reception of the holy communion.—— "Porro autem indicit ei vir Dei *triduanum jejunium*. * * * Eo jejunio religiose, ut res exigebat, expleto, sanctorumque suffragiis lacrymose imploratis, vir Dei divinis accingitur armis, Missamque suo more lacrymabundus celebrat. Cumque jam sacram sumpsisset Eucharistiam, et Marchioni quoque inhianter expectanti eam impertisset, * * * pristinæ sanitati mirabiliter restitutum se gratulatur. Ibid., p. 106, § 6. For other instances of the piety of Arnulf see ALFORD, vol. iii. pp. 310, 311, § 4, 7. Hist. Relation. Corp. S. Walaric. in *Gest. Reg. et Franc. Script.*, vol. ix. p. 148. WALLINGFORD, p. 543.

the entire time of his exile. But though the benignant care of this good prince was daily exhibited towards Dunstan, still the heart of the abbot remained in his country —in that land, from which he was removed, and that a pitiless doom excluded him. Grief weighed down his spirits—tears were in his eyes, sighs were on his lips, at the ever recurring thoughts of the exile he was enduring, and that exalted state of religious perfection in his own monastery from the presence and practise of which he had been torn.*

* Brithfrith, c. 4, § 22, 23. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 354. In the course of our history, thus placing St. Dunstan on the continent, it is not, we consider, inappropriate to the object of our work, to call attention to the condition of the labouring classes at this period of time, as they are described by a contemporary. The author Richer, whose work has been recently discovered, states that spies were sent by his father in the year 956 to Mons—that these spies appeared dressed as poor men; that they were hired as day labourers to carry stones; that as such they eat with the stone-cutters and masons in the presence of the wife of their employer—Rainier—and that they thus had the opportunity of seeing the chamber where the lady slept, the place for her children —the course of proceeding with the servants—the times appointed for the arrangement of the household—and that upon the approach of Sunday, they received their pay and quitted work. The extract though brief, gives an interesting picture of the condition of the working classes and the simplicity of manners that prevailed in the tenth century.

"Procedunt itaque duo tantum in habitu paupertino, ac usque ad oppidi portam deveniunt. Extruebantur tunc muri per loca potioribus ædificiis. Unde et lapidum cæmentique portitores, sæpe per portam egrediebantur, regrediebanturque præsente eorum qui operi præsidebant. Adsunt exploratores, et ad comportandum lapides offerunt sese. Deputantur operi, daturque eis clitellaria sporta. Comportant itaque cæmentum ac lapides ac nummos singulos singuli in dies accipiunt. Ante dominam etiam cum latomis et cæmentariis bis cibati sunt, curiose omnia contemplantes. Dominæ etiam cubiculum, ejusque natorum diverticulum, sed et famulorum egressum et regressum, actionumque tempestatem, ubi

It was in the year 956, that the abbot Dunstan was driven beyond the sea.* Not only did Edwy, seduced by the blandishments of a harlot, then banish from the country Dunstan, the stern rebuker of his foolishness; but having stained his soul with this crime, he, to the greater grief of Dunstan, stripped all the members of the monastic order in England of their property, and then condemned those innocent persons to the unmerited misery of banishment.† Then, indeed, was the appearance of monasticism in England most sad and pitiful.‡

So far, in sooth, was Edwy from being wise, that he did not pay even the slightest regard to the counsels of the wise; but like another Roboam, despising the warnings of

---

etiam oppidum insidiis magis pateat, multa consideratione pernotant. Et diebus quatuor consumptis dies imminebat dominica. Sicque accepta laboris mercede ab opere soluti sunt." RICHER., *Histor.*, lib. iii. c. 8, vol. ii. p. 10, (Soc. Hist. Franc.)

* *Sax. Chron.* The same authority states that "archbishop Wulstan died in the course of this year and was buried at Oundle." As to the expulsion of Dunstan, see R. DICET, p. 456, ETHELRED, p. 358, BROMTON, p. 863.

† W. MALMSB. de Vit. Aldhelm, in *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 32.

‡ W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 147. He here mentions as in the life of St. Aldhelm, that even the monastery of Malmsbury, inhabited by monks for two hundred and seventy years, was attacked by the king, and converted into a stall for secular canons—irregular and vagabond men—"clericorum stabulum * * * homines irregulares et vagos." He adds that though Malmsbury was thus spared from destruction, and even its property increased by Edwy upon the discovery of the relics of St. Aldhelm, "still," says the learned monk, William, "my thoughts shrink back with horror from the recollection of his frightful and cruel conduct towards other monasteries; conduct to which he was impelled by his own wanton disposition, and the advice of a strumpet, who had ensnared and misled his youthful mind."

the old, he acted upon the suggestions of the young.* Surrounded by a body-guard of perverse creatures, and guiding himself not by what could be called their advice, but their folly, he despoiled the best men in the land of their estates, proscribed the rich, despoiled the churches, afflicted the religious, oppressed the cities with manifold exactions, and did not in his cruelty spare even those who were nearest to him in blood—nay, he, even in the rage of his rapine, proved himself to be another Nero, turning against her—Elgiva—who was the mother of a royal race of kings.† Even she, who was looked up to as the august, the illustrious mother of the English nation—Elgiva—the help of churches, the guardian of the oppressed, and the almoner of the poor, was terribly persecuted by king Edwy; for despoiling her of all her estates, he basely and cruelly deprived her of that rank and state which she had previously enjoyed.‡

Many other misdeeds were perpetrated by king Edwy; but as they are elsewhere described more fully, (although in no place particularized in their consecutive order) we have deemed it to be sufficient to allude only to these.§

These misdeeds, however, Odo, a soldier of the Almighty God, was no longer able to regard with equanimity, and he therefore declared himself as the open and avowed foe to the iniquities of the sovereign. He saw that he could neither by his admonitions, his prayers, nor his censures,

---

* Osbern, c. 6, § 29.

† Ibid., *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 367.

‡ Osbert., *Vit. S. Dunstan*, in Surius *de Robatis Sanctorum*, vol. iii. p. 318. See p. 336.

§ *Vit. S. Odo*, c. 2, § 33.

abate the sin, nor amend the sinner. He therefore had recourse to his pontifical authority; and hence one of the females before referred to—she who had rendered herself infamous in the sight of mankind, by her profligacy with the king, and notorious by the influence she exercised over him, won by the worst of means—was taken by main force, by soldiers sent for that purpose, out of one of the palaces of the king, in which she resided; and then, her face being disfigured by a hot iron brand, she was driven under a sentence of perpetual exile to Ireland, which was destined to be her place of banishment.*

After a short space of time all traces of the branding had disappeared—her personal beauty was restored, whilst the deformity of her soul continued. Hence this wicked woman (disregarding the sentence of banishment imposed upon her), abandoned Ireland, landed in England, and, imbued with the malignity of a blinded heart, returned to the king at Gloucester.†

The mercy of God had not abandoned the people of England, even though the country was deprived of the presence of so great a protector as St. Dunstan; for it aroused the hearts of Englishmen, from the waters of the Humber even to the banks of the Thames, on which the city of London is built.‡ It impelled them all to declare themselves opposed to the impious king Edwy. All united together as one man, not only to deprive him of his crown,

---

* *Vit. S. Odo*, c. 2, § 33, 34. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. ii. p. 71. See upon this transaction the remarks of PINIUS, p. 66, § 16, and LINGARD'S *History of England*, vol. i. p. 218.

† *Vit. S. Odo*, c. 2, § 35. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. ii. p. 71.

‡ OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 6, § 33.

but they resolved even to drive him out of the kingdom, because he had, as a king entrusted with the government of the people, acted with insane wickedness; because he had scorned and oppressed the virtuous; because he had adopted as his councillors those who were incapable of wisely and well advising him; and finally, because by his unlawful passions and arrogant pride he was impelling the country to destruction.*

Assembling together in immense numbers, and in arms, they pursued the king and his harlot from one hiding-place to another. The latter was discovered at a short distance from the city of Gloucester, and there hamstrung, as the crimes of which she had been guilty were such as exposed her to the punishment of instant death.† His for-

---

* "Verum etiam ipsum regno expellere moliti sunt, propterea quod *in commisso regimine* insipienter egisset, sapientes disperderet, ignaros boni suis consiliis asciscceret, prorsus libidine atque arrogantia præceps abiret." OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 6, § 33.

"Quoniam *in commisso regimine* insipienter egisset, sagaces vel sapientes odio vanitatis disperdens, et ignaros quosque sibi consimiles studio dilectionis adscissens." BRITHFRITH, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 5, § 24.

Thus we see, in this impeachment of Edwy, and in these allegations against him as a monarch, that in Catholic times—in "the dark ages," and in the estimation of "monks," what were the crimes in a sovereign that justified insurrection against him; and how it might happen that a king could be lawfully deposed, viz. when he abused the privileges which were only conferred upon him *in trust* for the benefit of the people. We shall find notions far different from these promulgated by *Churchmen* in England, from the period of "*the Reformation*" to "*the Revolution.*"

† The punishment of hamstringing was inflicted on this wretched woman, "ne meretricio more ulterius vaga discurreret." *Vit. S. Odo*, c. 2, § 35. It is added, in the same paragraph, that in this case it was followed by death in the course of a few days.

mer subjects at length drove the fugitive king across the Thames.*

It was in the year 957, that Edwy was thus contemptuously rejected by the Mercians and Northumbrians, and that his brother Edgar was elected by them as king, and the principalities assigned to each were so allocated that the river Thames should form the boundary line between both.†

No sooner had Edgar been thus chosen by the aforenamed people to rule over them as a king, than, acting upon the inspiration of heaven, he recalled from his unhappy exile the venerable abbot Dunstan; for Edgar well remembered how great was the reverence felt by his royal predecessors for the abbot, and how well the latter had repaid their love, by the sagacity of his wisdom, by his untiring services, and by the most devoted loyalty. Thus was Dunstan recalled from exile, and on his return received with such marked honour as suited his great virtues.‡

Not only was St. Dunstan restored to the dignities and honours which he formerly had enjoyed, but at the same time the grandmother of the sovereign, and some others, whom his brother had deprived of their estates, were restored to all that they formerly possessed, and to that rank

---

* OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 6, § 33. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 368.

† F. WIGORN, p. 605. The names of the several provinces allocated to each will be found in WALLINGFORD, p. 543.

Edgar was sixteen years of age when called to the throne, and was consecrated as king at Bath. *Annales de Hida,* as quoted in ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 315, § 1. He was not however crowned as a king until the thirtieth year of his age. W. MALMSB. *Rer. Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 160.

‡ BRITHFRITH, c. 5, § 24. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 354.

of which an iniquitous doom had alone deprived them.* Thus did Edgar proceed — daily increasing like David in piety and fortitude, and like Solomon in wisdom, riches, and glory; whilst the power and influence of Edwy daily decayed, because he did not cease to add, in his life, one flagitious act to another.

A few days after his election, Edgar commanded a Witenagemot of his entire kingdom to be held, by which were annulled all the iniquitous dooms of his brother; and all property tyrannically taken possession of by him was restored to their lawful owners.† This council was held at Bradford.‡

Shortly afterwards occurred the death of the bishop of Worcester, Ceonwalch, a man of great humility, and a monk. Saint Dunstan was chosen to succeed him, and was consecrated by Odo, archbishop of Canterbury.§

It was with some reluctance that St. Dunstan yielded to the vehement prayers of his prince, and determined upon accepting the see of Worcester, which had flourished up to that time under the protection of the blessed Virgin Mary.‖ Upon proceeding to Canterbury to be consecrated, and there stating what was the prayer of the clergy and the people, the high priest of God, Odo, joyfully assented to

---

* Brithfrith, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 5, § 24. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 355.

† Osbern, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 6, § 33, 34. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 368, 369.

‡ Brithfrith, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 5, § 25. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 355. See Spelman, vol. i. p. 431; Labbæus, vol. ix. p. 658.

§ F. Wigorn, ad an. 957, p. 605.

‖ Osbern, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 7, § 34.

it; but, wonderful to be told, in performing the office of consecration, he with a joyous manner and a happy countenance was observed to consecrate Dunstan, not as bishop of the Wiccii, but as archbishop of Canterbury. He was reprehended for this by the clergy around him, because he had not acted in accordance with the decrees of the fathers, which do not permit there being two bishops of the same diocese, nor allow the occupant of a see to have the right of naming his successor. To these objections Odo is reported to have made this answer:*

"I know well, my children, that which God worketh in "me. As long as I live, I am certain that Dunstan will "preside as the bishop over the diocese of Worcester; but "when I am dead, all England will rejoice in him as the "ruler of the church. The gift of the Holy Ghost cannot "be restrained by written rules."†

No sooner was Dunstan entrusted with the pastoral staff, than he was seen to plant, with the foresight and sagacity of enlightened wisdom, the vine of the true faith, and to sow in the hearts of all believers the seed of the Holy Trinity, whilst the tares of error were removed.‡ King Edgar perceiving how wisely, and how well, this vigilant pastor governed the diocese that had been entrusted to him, subsequently§ confided to him the diocese

---

* Osbern, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 7, § 34. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 369.

† *Vit. S. Odo*, c. 2, § 38, *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. ii. p. 71.

‡ Brithfrith, c. v. § 25. "In qua statim vere fidei vitem palmitemque justitiæ sagaci cultu plantavit, et triticeum sanctæ Trinitatis semen in credentium cordibus, evulsis errorum tribulis seminavit."

§ In the year 958, F. Wigorn, p. 605.

of London upon the demise of its pious prelate. It was an appointment that was of vast advantage, not only to the inhabitants of the city, but to the entire of the population of the East Saxons—it was bestowing upon them the means whereby they might ascend even unto the highest regions of heavenly happiness.* The instant that Dunstan took charge of the diocese of London, he built at Westminster a monastery for twelve monks—it was on the same spot where formerly the bishop Mellitus had erected a church in honour of St. Peter—and over this monastery he Dunstan appointed as abbot, the saintly Wulfsinus.† The two dioceses of Worcester and London were thus for years governed by Dunstan ; and, by precept and example, did this good shepherd guide both flocks in that way which leads to Christ and to celestial felicity.‡

In the year 958, archbishop Odo pronounced a sentence of divorce§ between king Edwy and queen Elfgiva, because they were too closely related to each other.‖

---

* Brithfrith, c. 5. § 25.

† *M. Westminst.*, ad an. 958, p. 196.

‡ Brithfrith, c. v. § 25. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv, p. 355. As to the appointment of Dunstan to the dioceses of Worcester and London, see Osbern, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. vii. § 34, 37, *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. pp. 369, 370.

§ Literally "separated."

‖ "Her on thissum geare Oda arcebiscop totwæmde Eadwi cyning and Ælfgyfe, for thæm the hi waeron to gesibbe." *Sax. Chron.* The words of Florence of Worcester on this point are important—"vel quia ut fertur propinqua illius extitit, vel quia

In the course of this year died Odo.* "Odo the good archbishop,"† a man renowned for his genius, and admired for his virtues; and who was gifted with the spirit of prophecy. Removed from the toils and troubles of this world, he was led by angels to partake of the joys of Paradise.‡

Upon the death of Odo, the office of this high priest was bestowed upon Elffinus, bishop of Winchester, surnamed the "blear-eyed," and who obtained the archbishopric, by bestowing pecuniary bribes upon the leading nobles who were favourites in the court of king Edwy.§

---

illam sub propria uxore adamavit." p. 605. "Cujusdam cognatæ suæ eximiæ speciei juvenculæ illicitum invasit matrimonium * * * Sancti Odonis Archipræsulis auctoritate per ipsum ad repudium mulieris est coactus." *Hist. Ramesiensis*, c. 7. p. 390"——cum uxore cujusdam magnatis licet consanguinea sua——BROMTON, p. 863. See WALLINGFORD, *Chron.*, p. 542. ROG. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 407. The wife from whom Edwy was thus separated was named Elfgiva—the mother designated in the life of St. Odo, as being "amplior potentia et obscenior impudentia," (c. ii. § 34), was named Ædelgyw (Ethelgiva,) and it was upon her the punishments of branding, banishment, and hamstringing were inflicted. Some historians have overlooked this distinction, and have confounded together the crimes, the conduct, and the destiny of an immodest woman who bore the name of "a wife," and of her mother who openly practised vice, and persecuted virtue. Mr. Thorpe, in his notes on LAPPENBERG's *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 132, points out the distinction between "Ælgifa regis uxor, et Æthelgifa mater ejus."

* F. WIGORN, p. 605, ad an. 958.

† "Odo se goda arcebiscop." *Sax. Chron.* a. 961.

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 605, a. 958.

§ *Vit. S. Odo*, c. iii. § 41, "in palatio regis *Eadgari.*" The introduction of the name *Edgar* for *Edwy* is a manifest mistake. See WHARTON, *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 85, (note *) The see of Canterbury was at this time within the kingdom of Edwy. He who

Even before the death of Odo this Elffinus had been most anxious to possess himself of the high priestly office, but the courage and constancy of virtuous bishops had baulked his ambition. On his approaching Canterbury, Elffinus was met in solemn procession, and advanced at its head to the tomb of the holy man. He stood over the grave of Odo, and thus with dire expressions reproached the dead:

"Fool! there now liest thou defunct and rotten in thy "grave, and I can, as I have often wished to do, "triumph over thee. Whilst thou didst live I never "could be supreme pontiff of the English; but now, "that thou art dead, I have become that, which I so long "desired to be. To thee, ill-conditioned and decrepid old "man, I owe no thanks; for if thou couldst have longer "lived, thou never wouldst have made me, nor any one "else, a participator in thy honours."

These words were spoken aloud, so as to be heard by all present, and then Elffinus, fired as it were with the madness of rage, struck the tomb with his staff, and withdrew from the church.

The same night, and, at that period of time when mortals are buried in sleep, Saint Odo appeared to an honest man, who was the care-taker of the church. The face of the saint was of a milky whiteness, and the garments with

---

lent himself to the sin of simony, hated Dunstan, to use the classical language of Mr. Wharton, "angue et cane pejus," p. 109, (note †). Simony could not have been practised in the court of Edgar, as long as the conduct of the monarch, was influenced by the counsels of St. Dunstan. See BRITHFRITH, Vit. S. Dunst. c. v. § 25. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 355.

which he was invested were of the colour of the blooming red rose. "Sleepest, or wakest thou?" he said to the man. "I was sleeping, most reverend lord," replied the care-taker; "but now that thou speakest to me, I am "wakeful and watchful." "Go then," said Odo, "to "Elffinus—to him the bishop elect (but not the bishop "chosen by God), and bear him, in my name, this mes-"sage.

"'This message sendeth Odo the servant of Christ to "'thee Elffinus. I am not dead but living—living with "'my king, the Almighty God. And in order that thou "'mayest feel fully assured of this, know, that as whilst I "'lived, thou never wast able to obtain the archiepiscopal "'mitre of Canterbury; so now also, and through my "'intercession—now that I am living in the kingdom of "'heaven, the honour that thou hast surreptitiously ob-"'tained, thou shalt speedily lose. Mark well Elffinus "'what I now say to thee. As thou didst yesterday de-"'ride me with opprobrious expressions, and as thou didst "'strike my tomb with thy staff; so do I now proclaim "'unto thee, that thou shalt pass the sea in safety, and "'that thou shalt even ascend the Alps, but never shalt "'thou obtain the pallium of the holy see of Canter-"'bury, nor ever seat thyself in its apostolical throne.'"

The man who beheld this vision, fearful of the resentment of Elffinus, concealed from him the message with which he had been entrusted. The following night Saint Odo appeared to him, and repeated the words to which he had previously given utterance. Still the man was afraid to disclose what had been said to him. On the third night the sanctified Odo appeared clothed with all the insignia of his pontifical dignity, rebuked the man for his un-

worthy timidity, and said, "If thou hast any regard for "thy happiness, I warn thee no longer to withhold from "thy bishop a knowledge of that which thou hast twice "heard from me. Do this: shouldst thou neglect it, thy "punishment will prove to thee that thou hast acted "badly."

The man awoke sorely afraid, and in the morning proceeded to Elffinus, and said: "Honoured father, thy pre-"decessor, the glorious Odo appeared to me as an angel of "God, and commanded me to deliver this message to "thee.

"'As thou didst yesterday deride me with opprobrious "'expressions, and as thou didst strike my tomb with thy "'staff; so do I now proclaim unto thee, that thou shalt "'pass the sea in safety, and that thou shalt even ascend "'the Alps, but never shalt thou obtain the pallium of "'the holy see of Canterbury, nor ever seat thyself in its "'apostolical throne.'"

These words were treated by bishop Elffinus as the fancies of a mere visionary. He regarded them as nothing more than the expressions of an empty and nonsensical threat. Not many days however were permitted to elapse before all the circumstances that had been predicted by the saint were fully realised.

Elffinus crossed the sea for the purpose of procuring the pall. He got over a portion of his journey with perfect success, but when he ascended the mountains he was destroyed by the piercing rigour of the cold. He directed the horses of those who were in his suite to be killed, and then placed his feet in the hot reeking bodies of the slain animals in the vain hope he might thereby restore the vital heat to his chilled limbs. The severity of

the frost was not to be thus baffled. The wrath of God raged against him: tortured by it, he impiously blasphemed, and his polluted soul parted from his body amid the Alpine snows. Thus was it shewn that the blessed Odo, whom the unhappy Elffinus had believed to be dead, still lived—and that he lived with Christ.*

King Edmund died on the first of October in the year 959.† The just judgment of God‡ fell upon him who for four years had tyrannised over and oppressed the English people, and whose reign had been rendered infamous by his impurities.§ At the close of his reign, and when he had repudiated his adulterous wife, he felt compunction for his sins, and attended to the advice of those who counselled him to do that which tended to his salvation. The Lord remembered his kingly ancestors, that they were the most Christian of sovereigns, and willing that none of

---

* *Vit. Odo.*, c. iii. § 41, 47. *Act. Sanct.*, (Julii). vol. ii. pp. 72, 73. See *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 85, 86. W. Malmsb., *Gest. Pont.*, lib. i. p. 201.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ The manner of his death is stated in various terms by different authors. The following authorities are quoted by Herr Lappenberg. "Bridferth, lib. i. "Novissimum flatum misera morte expiravit." Osbern, p. 84. Edwyo misera morte damnato." *Hist. Rames*, c. xiv. "Fatali sorte sublato." Turner (from a Cott. MS. "Rex West Saxonum Edwinus in pago Gloucestrensi interfectus fuit." *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 135, note 1. All these authorities, with the exception of the last, are consistent with the interpretation that a premature death, as a punishment for his sins, was inflicted upon him by God, and not by the hands of man.

§ Roc. de Wend., vol. i. p. 408.

that holy race should perish for ever, afforded to him time and the opportunity to save his soul from perdition.*

The body of Edwy was interred at the new monastery at Winchester.†

---

* ETHELRED. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, p. 359. The author adds that the soul of Edwy was saved by the prayers of St. Dunstan. A statement that is sanctioned by the authority of W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 147. OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 7. § 35. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 369. BROMTON, p. 863.

The repentance of Edwy in the last year of his reign as stated in the text, is confirmed by the proofs of gifts made by the monarch, for pious uses, which will be found in ALFORD, vol. iii. p. 318, § 3, 4.

† F. WIGORN, p. 605.

CHAPTER IX.

ST. EDGAR THE CONFESSOR.

The accession of St. Edgar prayed for by priests and laymen. . the title of "the Pacific" bestowed upon him. . an eulogium upon his character as a Christian and a king. Byrthelm deposed from the archbishopric of Canterbury, and St. Dunstan nominated. St. Dunstan travels to Rôme. . an anecdote respecting his abundant charity to the poor. The pallium and pontifical benediction bestowed upon Dunstan. . the occupations of this saint as an archbishop. By the advice of Dunstan, evil doers are punished by the king. St. Oswald elevated to the see of Worcester at the request of St. Dunstan. Character of Oswald. . Oswald's virtues, as a canon of Winchester, a contrast to the misconduct of other canons. . becomes a monk at Fleury. Suicide of a Northern Viking. Ethelwold appointed bishop of Winchester. Vicious canons expelled from the monastery of Winchester, and monks placed in it. Various monasteries established by Ethelwold. Marriage of Edgar and Elfrida. The abbot Turketul's visit to his friend, St. Dunstan, in London.

An account of the regulations of the monastery of Croyland.. of its old monks. The holy death of Turketul. Speech of king Edgar for the reformation of church abuses. The ancient kingdom of Northumberland divided into two ealdormenships. The men of Thanet punished for their crimes. Precept of king Edgar in 969 for the purification of monasteries. Monasticism vindicated by a miracle. St. Oswald's mode of correcting the abuses of the canons of Worcester. St. Oswald and the ealdorman Aylwin. The over-rigid abbot Folbert.. his vision. Abbo of Fleury a teacher in Ramsey. Translation of the relics of St. Swithin. Death of the Etheling Edmund. Charter to Glastonbury. Letter of the pope to an English nobleman. Visit of Kenneth, king of the Scotch, to the English court. The province of Lothian bestowed by Edgar upon Kenneth.. the conditions on which the grant was made. Strange conference between Edgar and Kenneth. Death of St. Elgiva, the mother of Edgar.. her wondrous predictions. St. Oswald made archbishop of York.. his journey to Rome.. acts as the king's ambassador at the papal court. Miracles at Ramsey by the sign of the cross and prayers for the dead. Relics of St. Wilfrid the younger discovered at Ripon. The great charity of St. Oswald. Edgar anointed as king at Bath. Edgar rowed upon the river Dee by eight tributary kings. Charter bestowed upon Malmsbury. The great naval armament of Edgar in 975. Administration of the law by Edgar.. a new coinage introduced by him .. his fame.. his attention to foreigners censured. Death of Edgar.. his tomb opened in 1052.. miraculous circumstance. Canons enacted during the reign of Edgar.

CHAPTER IX.

ST. EDGAR THE CONFESSOR.

A.D. 959—975.

In the year 959, upon the death of king Edwy, Edgar his brother undertook the government of the West Saxons, Mercians, and Northumbrians. Edgar was at this time sixteen years of age.*

The evil reign of Edwy had been marked with murders, and the perpetration of many crimes, whilst unnumbered woes were, through its means, entailed upon the people, until at last holy and good men, lay and clergy, acting in a truly penitential spirit, devoted themselves both night and day to prayers, beseeching God that he would take pity on them in their pressing need, and that he would

* *Sax. Chron.* See F. Wigorn, p, 605; S. Dunelm, *Hist. Eccles.* lib. ii. c. 20, p. 26; *Gest. Reg. Ang.* pp. 135, 157; R. Dicet, pp. 456, 457; *Chronol. August. Cantuar.* p. 2244. For a copy of the coronation oath of Edgar, see Anstey's *Guide to the History of the Laws and Constitutions of England,* pp. 97, 98.

give to them a king, such as would govern England in a manner suitable to the honour of the Almighty, and in accordance with the welfare of the commonwealth.* Their prayers were heard in Heaven; for in the silence of night a celestial voice was heard, proclaiming that Edgar, even though he was but in his boyhood, should be crowned as king.† And thus it was that Edgar, although not more than sixteen years of age, was by a joyful people speedily elevated to a kingly rank.‡ Far more prosperous in all his proceedings than any of his predecessors, Edgar was inferior to none in sanctity, and was superior to most in mildness, meekness, and urbanity of manners, shining out amongst a crowd of kings, as the brilliant morning star amid the vapoury mists of early day, or as the moon in the fulness of her argent light.§ Amongst the people he was not less worthy of commemoration than Cyrus amongst the Persians, Charlemagne amongst the Franks, or Romulus amongst the Romans. The kingdom of the English was so governed by him as to enjoy an almost beatific

---

* KNYGHTON, *De Event. Ang.* lib. i. c. i. p. 2312. See *Hist. Rames.* c. 7, p. 390.

† Upon the authority of the Hist. Rames. c. 3, Herr Lappenberg calls attention to the fact, that "Edgar was committed for education to Ælfwyn, the widow of Æthelstan, half-king of East Anglia, and was consequently from an early period familiar with the Danes and their customs." Lappenberg adds, "Connexions originating in this circumstance may even have been influential on his election to the throne of Mercia." *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 136, note 1. The authority quoted by Lappenberg states that king Edgar bestowed upon his nurse and instructress the vill of Weston, which her son afterwards bestowed, "for his soul's sake" (pro ejus anima) upon Ramsey monastery, and that Athelstan became a monk at Glastonbury. See *Hist. Ramesiens*, c. 3, p. 387.

‡ KNYGHTON, *Event. Ang.* lib. i. c. i. pp. 2312, 2313.

§ ETHELRED. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.* p. 359.

peace, and nations speaking different languages were united together by him, and governed by the same system of law, so that by what might be termed an unanimous assent, the same designation was applied to him as to Solomon, and he was styled "*the Pacific.*" Nor can it be a matter of wonder that such should be the case, for even at the moment of his birth the blessed Dunstan had heard the voices of angels, announcing that "the church should enjoy peace "during the reign of the boy, who had then come into the "world."* As the obscurity of the past night is dispelled by the radiant beams of the bright morning, so did the accession of this most pious king tend to expel from every portion of England the nocturnal gloom of infidelity, and with it the murky darkness of discord and discontent. Such power was there in his words, such majesty in his countenance, such dignity in his demeanour, and such suavity in his conduct, that, aided, blessed, and protected by Heaven, the entire island submitted unresistingly to him; and Scotland, Cumbria, and Wales voluntarily tendered to him their homage. So blessed was his reign, that during its continuance the sun seemed to shine with a calmer beam, the sea-wave to flow towards the beach in gentler undulations, the land to smile with more abundant harvests, and all the face of nature to bloom with fresher and more charming beauties. In his days there

* "Pax Anglorum ecclesiæ hujus pueri qui nunc notus est tempore." ETHELRED, p. 359.

"Pax Angliæ quamdiu puer iste regnaverit, et Dunstanus noster vixerit." W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 148.

"Sit Pax, sit magna Anglorum Ecclesiæ lætitia, quam diu puer natus regnum tenuerit, et noster Dunstanus mortalis vitæ metas transegerit." OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 4, § 22. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 366.

were no instruments of torture, nor gibbets, nor banishments, nor proscriptions; for a good king does not lightly take offence with those who are subject to his sway. Whilst he governed, the feelings of all coincided with those which were entertained by him who was the object of their love; because England then had a king who devoted his thoughts, his time, and his toil, to the creation and decoration of churches, the founding and enrichment of monasteries. Forty monasteries were in fact constructed by him in the kingdom of the English—some of these were assigned to monks and others to nuns. Glastonbury, which his father had founded, he completed. Abingdon, Burgh, Thorney, Ramsey, and the convent for nuns he founded in Winchester, were adorned with an extreme of care, that fitly corresponded with the pious intention in which it and they had originated.* In winter time, as in the summer season, it was his wont to travel through all the provinces of his kingdom, and to institute a diligent enquiry into the dooms delivered by his judges, as well as all the acts, conduct, and proceedings of his ministers and nobles, so as that he might know the manner in which justice was administered, and the statutes observed; and in so acting, the greatest anxiety was exhibited by him lest the poor should suffer any prejudice,† or be exposed to

* For an account of the benefactions of Edgar to various monasteries, abbeys and nunneries—Glastonbury, Winchester, Malmsbury, Peterborough, Barking, Ely, Abingdon, Worcester, Croyland, Bath, Wilton, Pershore, Hyde, Ramsey, and Thorney, see DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. i. pp. 4, 43, 49, 50, 56, 57, 58, 190, 206, 254, 266, 347, 436, 458, 474, 475, 507, 593, vol. ii. pp. 93, 256, 263, 323, 325, 410, 416, 427, 547, 593. (Ellis's Ed.)

† "Now this is the secular ordinance which I will that it be

any oppression on the part of the great and the powerful. Three thousand six hundred strong ships were built by him, with which he, for the double purpose of inspiring his foes with fear, and of rendering his own people robust and skilful by practise, was in the habit of sailing round every summer all the provinces that acknowledged his sovereignty.* And while worldly affairs were thus attended to by him, he was constantly engaged in conferences with bishops and learned men, respecting the law of God, and the holy scriptures, and that which he himself was able to learn, he never ceased to teach to his people, instructing them by his precepts, and encouraging them by his example.†

---

held. This then is first what I will; that every man be worthy of 'folk-right' as well poor as rich; and that righteous dooms be judged to him; and let there be such remission in the 'bot,' as may be becoming before God, and tolerable before the world." *Laws of King Edgar* ii. § 1. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 112.

* See W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 156.

† ETHELRED, *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, pp. 359, 360. This eulogy, it will be remarked, assumes a good deal of the form of poetry. It thus pourtrays that spirit of enthusiasm which most of the monkish writers felt for the memory of Edgar as a great reformer of church abuses. These abuses will be referred to more fully in the text; but for the present we cannot refrain from giving the portraiture of the state to which the invasions of the Northmen, and the misgovernment of Edwy had reduced the church and churchmen at the moment that Edgar ascended the throne:—

"Nam omnia passim per diversas provincias monachorum cœnobia, expulsis habitatoribus, *clericis secularibus cum concubinis suis* habitanda exposuit. Qui in hæreditatem Domini temere venientes, templum sanctum ejus polluerunt, facultates ecclesiarum in stipendiis enervantes, partem possessionum suis vel fratrum nepotibus in præbendas ordinarunt, partem in propios usus convertentes possiderunt," &c. *Hist. Ramesiens*, c. 7, p. 390.

The reformer of such abuses could not but be popular with pious

Byrhthelm, bishop of Somersetshire, was in (959) elevated to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury; but because he was in the judgment of all persons regarded as unfitted for so high and difficult an office, he returned to the diocese which he had but for a brief period abandoned.* Byrhthelm was a man remarkable for his meekness, mildness, diffidence and humility, and to such a degree did these qualities pervade his nature that he did not rebuke the

---

authors. In Ethelred we find poetical expressions; but in the Saxon Chronicle, the eulogy of Edgar is written in poetry:

"On his dagum
"Hit gododе georne," &c.

"In his days, it prosper'd well
"And God him gave, that he dwelt in peace
"The while that he lived,
"Whate'er he did, whate'er he planned
"He earned his thrift.
"He also reared God's glory wide
"And God's law loved, with peace to man,
"Above the king's that went before
"In man's remembrance,
"God to him sped that kings and earls
"To all his claims submission bowed,
"And to his will, without a blow
"He wielded all, as pleased himself.
"Esteemed he was both far and wide
"In distant lands, because he prized
"The name of God, and God's law traced,
"God's glory reared, both far and wide,
"On every side."

Saxon Chronicle as translated by the Rev. I. INGRAM, B.D., pp. 151, 152.

* F. WIGORN, vol. i. p. 138. THORPE'S *Edition*, (E.H.S.) See also p. 605, *(Frankfort Edition.)* In ROGER. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 408, Byrhthelm is designated bishop of Wells. In BRITHFRITH, c. 5, § 26, and in OSBERN, c. 7, § 40, he is called bishop of Dorchester, see note *c.* by BÆRTIUS, *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 371.

proud, nor correct the disobedient as he should have done.* This is to be borne in mind by all to whom authority is confided, that it is their duty not only to be the guardians and protectors of the virtuous, whilst they instruct them how they proceed in the path to greater perfection; but they must also chastise the reprobate, and punish the rebellious, in order that they may be the speedier deterred from the practice of vice, and the pursuit of sin. In these respects, Edgar perceived that Byrhthelm failed in the performance of the task assigned to him—that his over-tenderness was destructive to his flock—and His Majesty therefore desired him to return to the diocese which he had quitted, and to resume the functions which he had for a short time resigned. The king, influenced by a love for religion, and in accordance with the counsels of the wise, bestowed the high and priestly office upon Dunstan, whose firmness was well known to him.†

As soon as the office of archbishop was bestowed upon Dunstan he (in the year 960‡) undertook that long and tedious journey, which it was the practice for persons in his position to perform. His journey to Rome was successfully accomplished, for the Lord was his companion on the road, and to him, who was full of faith, the words of the prophet were completely realised; "I will give thee "understanding, and I will instruct thee in this way,

* BRITHFRITH, Vit. S. Dunst., c. 5, § 26. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 355.

† BRITHFRITH, Vit. S. Dunst., c. 5, § 26. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 355. See W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. i. p. 201.

‡ See R. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 409. F. WIGORN, p. 605. BÆRTIUS *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 356, note *h*.

"in which thou shalt go: I will fix my eyes upon thee"—and, in another place, "I will go before thee, and will "humble the great ones of the earth." It happened upon one occasion on this long journey that he found that all the victuals, which had been carried either upon horseback or brought by other means of conveyance, had been entirely disposed of by him, either in the subsistence of his own men, or in the sustentation of strangers. Dunstan said to the person who acted as his purveyor—"what have "you to supply us all with food for this night?" To this question the man angrily answered—"By my troth— "nothing; for you have taken care that nothing shall be "reserved for yourself, because as long as a morsel of any "thing eatable was under my superintendence, you have "never ceased supplying your followers and strangers "with abundant repasts." To this petulant remark the bishop replied—"Be not, I beseech you, unduly irritated "for a matter like this; for our Lord Jesus Christ is ever "generous and bountiful to all who believe in Him." "Well! well," said the man, "let us see how much food "your Saviour will send you for the night that is before "you." The archbishop then stood up, because as evening was fast approaching, he wished to go to some place apart where he might recite his office; and whilst the prelate was retiring, the purveyor jeeringly shouted after him—"Ay! ay! go now to your prayers and adorations of your "God, Who will not pay the slightest attention to the "wants that we feel, and the straight in which we are "placed." Now, there were in the very village in which the pious Dunstan and his followers had taken up their abode for the night, the messengers of a certain venerable abbot, who had been for three days waiting there to greet

the holy prelate, and who came to him before he had finished chanting the lauds of the evening service, to offer him refreshments of the best description, and every luxury in the way of food that the country produced, and who also on the part of the abbot, and of his faithful monks, expressed their congratulations to the bishop upon his arrival. These gifts of charity were received with thanks and benediction for the generous abbot and his pious brotherhood. The presents in food that were made on this occasion were so ample and so abundant, that the attendants of St. Dunstan were sumptuously supplied for a long time; whilst the absurd railing of the purveyor, being thus refuted by the faith and piety of the bishop, was never again indulged in.

At length, the long desired church of the Roman See was, under the safe guidance of the Lord, reached by St. Dunstan; and there the pallium and all the archiepiscopal privileges, with the pontificial benediction, were bestowed upon him.* The shrines of the saints were again and again visited by Dunstan; the poor in Christ consoled by him, and the journey back to England then in perfect peace accomplished.†

---

* By Pope John XII. See R. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 409. In William of Malmsbury, *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. i. p. 212, will be found the copy of a letter addressed by Pope John to St. Dunstan, in which the pontiff reminds the English prelate, that in granting to him the same privileges which were bestowed by Rome upon Augustine and his successors in the see of Canterbury, he should bear in mind the necessity that there was that a pastor so exalted should labour for the salvation of the flock confided to his care. See also copy of the same letter in BARONIUS, vol. xvi. § 8, 9, 10, and remarks of PAGI, § 3, pp. 109, 110.

† BRITHFRITH, Vit. S. Dunst., c. 5, § 27, 28, *Act. Sanct.*

Dunstan being now invested by the Roman pontiff with the white stole of his apostleship, and being thus destined to be patriarch not only of the entire nation of the English, but also to all the other nations subjected to the English, he at once commenced visiting the various states and cities, so that if there were any persons to whom Christianity continued still unknown, he might preach the faith to them,* and instruct them in such a manner that they might, by the performance of good works, prove themselves to be faithful servants of the Gospel.† In the discharge of this task it would have been difficult to discover any auditor of his discourses an obstinate listener, for nothing could be more sublime than his treatment of sacred subjects, nothing more winning than the quickness of his fancy, the aptness of his illustrations, the beauty of his language, and the melody of his voice. Whenever a moment's repose could be gained by him from external affairs, it was made use of by him to bring him in still closer communion with his God—to be employed in holy vigils, in the perusal of the Sacred Scriptures, or in the emendation of manuscripts of the Bible. His supreme desire was never to be an instant without being engaged

---

(Mai,) vol. iv. p. 355. The episode respecting St. Dunstan's journey to Rome is here introduced for the purpose of shewing the manner in which persons travelled in the tenth century—carrying with them their own provisions; and, as in this case, the uncalculating benevolence of the Catholic bishop, finding a resource in the boundless hospitality of kind-hearted and pious monks.

* "Ut si quibus nomen fidei incognitum fuisset." This probably refers to infidel Danes who at this time might have been living in various parts of England.

† OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst., c. 7, § 43. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 370.

in some religious work—now in delivering a just judgment between man and man; now in soothing down by his meek discourses and mild advice the angry passions and stubborn resentments of quarrelsome neighbours; now in dissolving the improper marriages of some, and now in refuting the heretical opinions of others;* here renewing the sacred buildings that had been neglected, there constructing new buildings; neither attempting to have edifices which might be dispensed with, nor to dispense with those which were absolutely required; whilst out of the just revenues of the church, subsistence was afforded by him to widows, orphans, and strangers; for the only value which Dunstan attached to money was the pious purposes to which it could be applied. Thus did he give his entire labours to his country, and always was far more anxious to prevent evil to others than to avert danger even to his own life.†

King Edgar placed the most full and implicit confidence in his advice, so much so that whatever was said by Dunstan was received by the sovereign as a decree emanating from the Almighty, and whatever the archbishop proposed as fitting to be enacted, the king determined should be enforced. Thus it was in accordance with the advice of Dunstan, that all the workers of every species of

---

* "Horum inepta dissolvere conjugia, illorum hæreticam refutare opinionem." OSBERN. The improper marriages here referred to are not improbably those of miserable clergymen who had violated their vows, and were guilty of the sacrilege of profaning the sacrament of marriage. Their crime is combined with that of heresy—as priest-marriages and heresy have always prevailed and flourished at the same time.

† OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst., c. 7, § 43.

diabolical iniquity—thieves, sacrilegious persons, violators of faith, compounders of poisons, exciters of impure passions, and along with these individuals who had conspired against the peace of the country, men who had laid violent hands on their parents, women who by an adulterous fraud had slain their husbands; in fine, all offenders against the law of God were driven out of the kingdom, and condemned to banishment either for a very long period, or for life. By the advice also of Dunstan all the servants of the church, who contemning their duty and profession as Christian ministers, devoted themselves to the chace, or were immersed in the pursuit of gain, or contaminated by unlawful indulgences, were visited with, and coerced by, a severe censure, or subjected to an instant deprivation of their offices. It was in consequence of this regulation, that whilst some ministers in some of the most celebrated churches, were deliberating whether or not they would prefer their duties to their pleasures, they were, with the royal sanction, expelled from their churches, and the places they had occupied filled up with another, a different, and a better order of men. By this means the institutes of a most holy discipline were established, and so much did piety and devotion increase amongst the English people, that even persons of the most noble rank, and possessed of immense temporal power, were found to despise all the pomps and vanities of this world, and devote themselves to the service of their God; whilst all who were admitted as members of the ecclesiastical order, seemed to rival each other in the practise of every virtue; for the period had come when honor was reserved for merit, and dignity was permitted to be associated with nothing but what was distinguished for its goodness. Thus was there the per-

fection of discipline, the perpetuity of peace, the opulence of true riches, so that all that constitutes the happiness of existence seemed to be showered down upon England during the reign of Edgar, by that gracious God Who is the Author and the Giver of every blessing in this life. Thus the wisdom of the archbishop was the dictator to the justice of the king; the justice of the king obtained for him the mercy of God; and the mercy of God bestowed upon the nation every good thing in abundance.*

A few months after his appointment to the see of Canterbury, Dunstan appeared as a petitioner in the palace of his sovereign, with the humble suggestion and earnest prayer to the pious king, that he would elevate to the see of Worcester a religious, mild, and lowly monk, namely, the blessed Oswald, a relative of his predecessor Odo, and who was well known to him, as having grown up in the fear of the Lord, and as already illustrious by many holy acts of sublime virtue. King Edgar assented to the request of Dunstan, and the latter immediately placed St. Oswald in the episcopal throne of Worcester.†

Saint Oswald, the descendant of a noble family, and remarkable for the beauty of his personal appearance, had, from the earliest years of boyhood, rendered himself conspicuous by the avoidance of puerile follies, and the study of every virtue.‡ Hence he was loved by all—not merely

* Osbern, Vit. S. Dunst., c. 7, § 44. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. pp. 370, 371.

† F. Wigorn, ad an. 960, p. 606.

‡ Capgrave, *Nova Legend. Ang.*

by those who were united to him by the ties of blood, but by every person who came in contact with him, and who, through his piety, was made acquainted with his amiability.* His father's brother was St. Odo, the archbishop of Canterbury—that holy man who was illustrious for his wisdom, and revered for his sanctity, his justice, and the perfection of every act of his life. To that good man his nephew, Oswald, was entrusted by his parents, in order that the mind of the youth might, from an early period, be imbued by the doctrines, and strengthened by the good example and faultless manners of the uncle.† As soon as Oswald was well, and thoroughly instructed in every species of worldly science and scriptural knowledge,‡ he was made a canon at Winchester by St. Odo; and whilst others trampled under foot the instructions of the order, and followed the desires of their hearts, he was indefatigable in carrying into effect every rule that had been established for the regulation of a life of a canon.§ He was made a canon amongst canons—he was that which they were called—he was a regular amongst those who were irregular,‖ so much so, that he became an object of admiration to all, who saw the fulness of the grace of God shine forth

---

* Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 193.

† Capgrave, *Nov. Legend. Ang.*

‡ Eadmer, in his life of St. Oswald, states that the name of his instructor was Frithegod—a monk at Canterbury, who was distinguished in his day by his literary labours, and who, at the desire of St. Odo, wrote a metrical life of St. Wilfrid. See *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 193. *Act. Sanct.* (April,) vol. iii. p. 293, § 4.

§ Capgrave, *Nov. Legend. Ang.*

‖ "Fit Canonicus inter Canonicus ipsos; si quæritur qualis inter quales, regularis inter irregulares." Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald.

in his morality. Appointed to act as dean, he, who was still a youth, was placed in authority over those who were old—his immaculate life served him as grey hairs, which should ever be indicative of wisdom, and was a reproach to those who in the maturity of their years were contaminated with the passions of youth.* He, as a youth, endeavoured to reform them; but they, preferring the old habits of an evil settled custom, declared that they could not be induced to assent to the changes he desired to introduce.†

No sooner did Oswald feel assured of this, than he despised the secular pomp and riches with which he was surrounded,‡ and determined to proceed to Fleury, where rest the remains of St. Benedict.§ Commendatory letters and many rich gifts were bestowed upon the youth by St. Odo, who had also, when he was young, crossed the sea, and received the habit of a monk in the monastery of Fleury. In this place Oswald became a monk, and he who had travelled thither to be instructed by others, so conducted himself that he was soon regarded by them as an example to be imitated. He took but little sleep, he was sparing in food, he was discreet in speech, he was constant in prayer. His patience, his humility, his benevolence, his meekness, and his gentleness, were such that they seemed to place him beyond the frailties of human

---

*. EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 193.

† CAPGRAVE. *Nov. Legend. Ang.*

‡ "Spretâ qua cingebatur pompa sæculari, spretis quoque divitiis quarum copia redundabat." EADMER, *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 194.

§ Upon the custom of Englishmen at this period going to the monastery of Fleury, see W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. iii. p. 270.

nature. A secret and sequestered cell in the monastery was assigned to him by the abbot and there he lived absorbed in devotion—and there his entire days were passed in prayer and meditation.*

Upon hearing of the holy life of his nephew Oswald, the saintly Odo gave great thanks to Almighty God; and, by his various gifts to the abbot and monks, manifested the gratitude he felt for the care bestowed upon his nephew.† St. Odo also indicated to the monks that he was

---

* The author here adds that St. Oswald, whilst thus passing the life of a recluse, was frequently afflicted by temptations of the devil, one of these was a very remarkable one, because the demon appeared before him in the form of an angel from Heaven; but was on the instant put to flight by St. Oswald's testing his sanctity by making the sign of the cross.

"Vir Dei signo Crucis se munivit. Sciens exinde Angelum lucis non irritandum; angelum autem tenebrarum, eminus effugandum. Et factum est ita, nam malignus ille tentator, viso Crucis signaculo, velut fumus, ab oculis ejus evanuit."

Eadmer states the same fact in the life of St. Oswald, and adds that upon Oswald discovering he had defeated the devil, by the sign of the cross, he in his joy made use of these words from the Psalms: "I set the Lord always in my sight: for He is at my "right hand, that I be not moved. Therefore my heart hath been "glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced: moreover my flesh also "shall rest in hope." *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 195.

† It may be here observed, that though Oswald was a canon, and had been dean in Winchester, he did not receive holy orders until he became a monk at Fleury. His progress to the priesthood at Fleury is distinctly marked by Eadmer:

"Hæc inter exercitia ejus post susceptos inferiores ecclesiastici ordinis gradus, gradum suscepit Diaconatus——

"Talibus donorum insignis Vir Dei Oswaldus ad potiorem Diaconatu Ecclesiastici ordinis gradum conscendere dignus est comprobatus, ac dein Presbyteri honore sullimatus. In quo gradu De sacrificans——" Vit. S. Oswald, *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 195.

It is, we conceive, necessary to call attention to this fact, because many grievous mistakes are made by modern writers as to

most anxious to have the satisfaction of seeing his nephew in England; for that he was now worn out with years, and as he felt that his death was fast approaching, he wished to have beside him such persons as might enable him to establish a regular system of religious discipline amongst his countrymen. Upon receiving this message from St. Odo, the monks were greatly afflicted, but still as they were disinclined to oppose themselves to the wishes of the archbishop, they permitted Oswald to leave them, and in so doing marked his departure from them with every testimony of respect and honour. Before Oswald, however, had time to reach Canterbury, Odo had departed this life.* As soon as Oswald heard of the death of Odo, his first impulse was to return on the instant to Fleury; but being counselled by his companions not to be wanting in respect to those with whom he was connected by family ties, he repaired, upon the obsequies of the holy archbishop being completed, to Oskitell, the archbishop of York, to whom he was a near relative.† Captivated with the gentle manners of the archbishop, he passed some years in his pious society, and then Dunstan abandoning the sees of London and Worcester to become archbishop of Canterbury, Oswald, whose merits were not unknown to the new archbishop, was at his request appointed to the see of Worcester.‡

---

the reforms in church discipline effected at this period by St. Dunstan, from their supposing that *all* the canons expelled by him from the monasteries were priests.

* Capgrave, *Nov. Legend. Ang.*

† W. Malmsb., *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. iii. p. 270.

‡ Ibid. Alford places in this year (960) the death of St. Edburga, the daughter of Edward the Elder. *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*

In the year 961, Elfgar, a relative of the king, died in Devonshire, and his body was interred at Wilton. A king, named Sifferth, committed suicide, and his remains were consigned to the earth at Winburne.*

"This year there was a very great pestilence, when the great fever was in London; and St. Paul's minster was consumed with fire, and in the same year was afterwards restored. In this year Athelmod, the mass-priest, went to Rome, and there died on the 18th before the calends of September.†

In this year, the Earl Ordgar built a monastery at Tavistock in Devonshire, which he filled with religious monks. This Earl Ordgar was the father of Elfrida, the queen of King Edgar, and mother of Ethelred, afterwards king of the English.‡

---

vol. iii. § 17, 18, pp. 324, 325. See with respect to St. Edburga, pp. 330, 331, in this volume.

In this year King Edgar issued a precept to a person named Togred, to pay to the monastery of St. Denis, in Paris, the tribute which had been assigned to it by his predecessors, in honour of the martyrs, SS. Denis, Rusticus, and Eleutherius. See *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. ix. p. 397. ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Ang.* vol. iii. § 14, 15, 16, p. 324.

* *Sax. Chron.* "In one of the first naval expeditions undertaken by Eadgar, he reduced the Danes in Ireland to subjection, and took Dublin, the first acquisition of the Anglo Saxons beyond their own territory. King Sigeferth, who, it is mentioned, killed himself at Winburne, was probably a Danish prisoner of war." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 140. Upon the prevalence of suicide amongst the Northmen, see BLACKWELL'S edition of MALLET'S *Northern Antiquities*, pp. 150, 151, 152, 208.

† *Sax. Chron.* as translated by the REV. I. INGRAM, B.D., p. 153.

‡ ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. pp. 409, 410. The monastery of Tavistock "was finished by Ordulf, the son of Ordgar, in 981;

In the year 963, Ethelwold, abbot of the monastery of Abingdon, and who had been educated by St. Dunstan, succeeded to the diocese of Winchester, upon the death of Brithelm.* In the course of the same year, Ethelwold, in accordance with the command of King Edgar, expelled† all

---

Chron. Tinemut.; afterwards burned by the Danes in 997. Sim. Dunelm, ad an." COXE, (Rog. de Wend. vol. i. p. 409, note 5,) E.H.S. The beauty of this monastery and its situation is greatly praised by William of Malmsbury, who also mentions some extraordinary feats of strength performed by Ordulf. See *Gest. Pont. Ang.* lib. ii. p. 256.

In alluding to this abbey, Camden remarks, that "there remain only two gates *(one a prison)* and part of the refectory, *now a meeting-house*, a large park, a tower, with elegantly fretted pinnacles, *converted into a mill-house.* The *Chapter-house*, which was entire, with 46 beautiful arches, and *the Saxon school*, were *pulled down* in 1736 *to build a house for the Duke of Bedford's steward(!!!)* In *the only arch* of the cloisters they shew two large bones, pretended to be Orgar's, or rather Ordulf's, whose figure was there in 1718, *but is now gone.*" CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 44. (Gough's ed.)

This mitred abbey was at the time of the dissolution valued at £902, (Tanner, p. 87), "now worth £18,045 12*s.* 6*d.*; *granted* 31st Henry VIII. *to Lord John Russell.*" COBBETT. For further particulars respecting Tavistock abbey, see DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 489—505.

* F. WIGORN, p. 606.

† The expressions used by the Saxon Chronicle as to this expulsion of "clerks," are worthy of being quoted:

"And draf ut tha *clerca* of the biscoprice:" "And drove out the *clerks* from the bishopric." Upon this sentence the Rev. J. Ingram, B.D., translator of the Saxon Chronicle, observes as to the word *clerks*:—

"i. e. the secular clergy, who observed no rule; opposed to the regulars, or monks," p. 153. In the same page, however, in which the word "clerca" is employed, there is twice used the word, "mass-priest," *mæsse-preost*, and most probably on both occasions applied to secular clergymen. The word *clerk*, we have already noticed in reference to the miracle of St. Odo, &c. (see pp. 221, 461, 462, of this volume) was often applied to persons who were not clergymen, but merely discharging some office in connexion with the church;

the clerks, who lived as if they were laymen, and sub-

(see Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 4, § 32. *Act. Sanct.* (August) vol. i. p. 94) applied then, as it is still commonly used, viz. to the person serving the priest at mass. The following extracts taken at random will shew the general manner in which the word "*clericus*" was used :—

"Habeatque *clericum* seu *garcionem* suo servitio specialiter attendentem." INGULPHUS, *Hist.* p. 49.

"De diversis ad se partibus *clericos* convocabat : et quos dociles cernebat, eos gratis libenterque docebat." Vit. S. Majoli, Ab. Cluniac, lib. i. § 12. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. ii. p. 672.

"—— juxta morem ecclesiasticum benedicens eum, decisa capitis ejus coma, in *clericum* totondit." Vit. S. Mauron, § 2. "Factus namque postmodum, Levita." § 3. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. ii. p. 53.

"Clerici, *extra sacros ordines* constituti." BED. *Hist. Eccles.* lib. i. c. 27.

"Secundum more ecclesiasticum, *prius* ad *clericatus* officium tonsoratus, ac *deinde* paucis labentibus annorum curriculis *in gradum sacerdotalem* consecratus est." Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. i. § 7. *Act. Sanct.* (August) vol. i. p. 90.

"Qui *pauperes* ita fuere dispositi, ut omnes literarum socii *omnes clerici* sunt. *De his* ergo reverendus pater Oswaldus *unum* delegerat, ut quotiens in ipsa Missarum volebat solennia celebrare, *ejus ope* ac ministerio tanti mysterii officium celebraret." EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald, Arch. Ebor. *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 196.

It is as certain that *some* canons were priests, as that *all* persons called *clerks* were not either regular or secular priests.

"Seven degrees," says Ælfric, "are established in the church : one is ostiarius; the second is lector; the third, exorcista; the fourth, acoluthus; the fifth, subdiaconus; the sixth, diaconus; the seventh, presbyter.

"Ostiarius is *the church door-keeper*, whose duty it is to announce the hours with bells, and unlock the church to believing men, and to shut the unbelieving without.

"Lector is *the reader*, who reads in God's church, and is ordained for the purpose of preaching of God's word.

"Exorcista is, in English, *he who with oath conjures*, in the Saviour's name, the accursed spirits who torment men, that they forsake those men.

"Acoluthus he is called who bears the candle or taper in God's ministries when the gospel is read, or when the housel is hallowed at the altar; not to dispel as it were with the dim darkness, but

stituted in their place* in the old monastery at Winchester religious monks, who conducted themselves in accordance with the rules of their order.† There were at the time to be found in the old monastery, canons so demoralised by the practice of most abominable iniquities, and so perverted by pride, insolence, and luxury, that some of them would not deign to say mass when it was their duty to do so; that they repudiated wives whom they had, contrary to law, married, and then united themselves to other wives; and who were to be found incessantly wallowing in gluttony and drunkenness.‡ The holy Ethelwold was intolerant of such iniquities as these, and he therefore, with the permission of King Edgar, expelled those detestable blasphemers from God's monastery, supplied their places with

---

with that light to announce bliss, in honour of Christ, who is our light.

"Subdiaconus is truly *under-deacon*, who bears forth the vessels to the deacon, and humbly ministers under the deacon *at the holy altar, with the housel vessels*.

"Diaconus is *the minister who ministers to the mass-priest*, and sets the offerings upon the altar, and also reads the gospels at God's ministries. *He* may baptize children, and housel the people. They shall minister to the Saviour in white albs, and lead a spiritual life in chastity, (mid clænnysse) and *all* be efficient persons, so as is befitting the order.

"Presbyter is the mass-priest, or old 'wita,' not that every one is old, but that he is old in wisdom. *He* hallows God's housel as the Saviour commanded. Canons of Ælfric, § 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. THORPE, pp. 443, 444.

* "Expulsis clericis sæculariter viventibus." With the explanation given in the preceding note, we conceive we are justified in thus translating these words.

† F. WIGORN, p. 606.

‡ "Nonnulli eorum dedignarentur Missas suo ordine celebrare, repudiantes uxores quas illicite duxerant, et alias accipientes, gulæ et ebrietate jugiter dediti." WOLSTAN.

monks from Abingdon, and constituted himself their abbot, as he was their bishop.*

The king sent to the bishop one of his most celebrated ministers, who was directed on the part of the sovereign to say to the canons, that one of two things was left to them to choose—either to resign their situations to the monks, or to become members of the monastic order. Upon receiving this message the canons were greatly terrified, but still, having an utter detestation of a monastic life, they, upon the entrance of the monks, immediately abandoned the monastery. Of these canons three afterwards became penitent, namely, Eadsin, Vulsin, and a priest called Wilstan. These returned to the monastery from which they had been expelled, and with humble and contrite hearts submitted their necks to the yoke of Christ.† At that time the only monks to be found in England were those in the monasteries of Glastonbury and Abingdon.‡

Ethelwold afterwards, with the assent of king Edgar, expelled the canons from the new monastery at Winchester, and placed monks there, who were subjected to a regular discipline. Over this latter place he ordained as

---

* Wolstan, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 2, § 16. *Act. Sanct.* (Aug.) vol. i. p. 92.

† The remaining canons, whether married priests or clerks, who were expelled, we are told by Wolstan and Malmsbury, lived and died as vagabonds—"tamdiu per diversas gentis Anglorum provincias huc illucque dispersi sunt, quosque vitam finierunt." Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 2, § 19. "Tota insula incertes vagabantur sedibus." *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib ii. § 149.

‡ Wolstan, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 2, § 18. *Act. Sanct.* (Aug.) vol. i. p. 92. The author should have added to the monks of Glastonbury and Abingdon the few that were then to be found under the abbot Turketul at Croyland. See Ingulphus, *Hist.*, p. 41.

abbot his disciple, Ethelgar, who was afterwards bishop of the East Saxons, and subsequently, upon the elevation of St. Dunstan to heaven, became archbishop of Canterbury.*

Ethelwold appointed Osgar to the abbacy of Abingdon, which he had himself held. This monastery was enriched by him by the gift of more than six hundred farms, and endowed with large and perpetual franchises, that were secured by charters signed by kings and bishops, and which charters with their golden burnished seals were long preserved at Abingdon.†

In a third monastery at Winchester that which in English is called Nunnamenster, he established, in honour of Mary the ever blessed Virgin mother of God, a community of nuns under the care of Ethedrida, and there the rules of the order were for many a year faithfully attended to.‡

The pious thoughts of Ethelwold were not restricted within the limits of the West Saxon monarchy, but they extended to the widest boundaries of Britain, and impelled him to congregate wherever he could, communities of monks devoted to the service of Heaven.§ He obtained from king Edgar the right to restore all the monasteries

---

* Wolstan, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 2, § 20. *Act. Sanct.* (August) vol. i. p. 92.

† "Divina simul et regia auctoritate conscriptis; quæ laminis aureis sigillata, inibi *usque hodie* conservantur." Wolstan.

‡ "Ubi regularis vitæ norma *hactenus* observatur." Wolstan. "He macode thær twa abbotrice, an of muneca, other of nunna." *Sax. Chron.*

§ Wolstan, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. iii. § 21, 22, 23. *Act. Sanct.* (August), vol. i. p. 93.

which the Pagan Northmen had destroyed. Upon this condition they were cheerfully assigned to him by the sovereign.* The first monastery repaired by him was Ely, where rest the relics of St. Etheldritha,† and where he placed as abbot one of his monks named Brithnoth—and, in so doing he changed Ely, which had formerly been devoted to the use of nuns, into an establishment for monks. This monastery was made very rich by Ethelwold, for it was endowed by him with many vills which he bought from the king.‡

---

* *Sax. Chron.*, a. 963.

† "Magnificatus——reliquiis et miraculis sanctæ Etheldridæ reginæ et perpetuæ virginis ac sociorum ejus." WOLSTAN, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. iii. § 23. See *Vit. S. Oswald*, c. ii. § 9. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 753. *Hist. Eliens*, c. iii, iv, v, pp. 464, 465, 466. DUGDALE's *Monasticon*, vol. i. pp. 457—500.

‡ *Sax. Chron.*, a. 963. "Bohte tha feala cotlis æt se king, and macode hit swythe rice." In the life of St. Ethelwold the words used give a more correct idea of what occurred to the lands and possessions of the monasteries, in consequence of the ravages of the heathen Northmen. These ruthless men having destroyed the monasteries took possession of the lands—but upon their expulsion by Christian sovereigns—the monks, the owners of the lands, being no longer in existence to claim their repossession, they were confiscated to the king's use; or to adopt the expressions of Wolstan; "in ipso tempore erat destitutus et regali fisco deditus." Then to regain them for the monastery where there were no charters, or title deeds to prove the original ownership, the lands had to be bought back from the king, as here—"datoque precio non modicæ pecuniæ emit eum a rege Edgaro." Where charters were shewn proving the title of the owners, the lands were reassigned by the king without charge, as in the case of Peterborough. See *Sax. Chron.*, 963. INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 25.

In purchasing lands for the monastery of Ely, we find that for the island the price given was one hundred pounds, sixty hides of land, and a golden cross of exquisite workmanship filled with relics —"dato *insuper* centum librarum pretio cum aurea cruce, mirifico opere polita, reliquiisque referta." *Hist. Eliens.*, lib. i. c. iv. p. 465. (Gale).

Afterwards came bishop Ethelwolf to the minster called Medhamstead, which was formerly ruined by heathen folk; but he found there nothing but old walls and wild woods. In the old walls at length he found hid writings which abbot Hedda had formerly written;—how king Wulfer, and Ethelred his brother had wrought it, and how they freed it against king, and against bishop and against all worldly service; and how pope Agatho confirmed it with his writ, as also archbishop Deusdedit. He then ordered the minster to be rebuilt, and set there an abbot, who was called Aldulf; and there he made monks where before, there was nothing.*

In the year 964 Edgar the pacific, the king of the English, was united in marriage to Elfrida the daughter of Ordgar, the lord of Domnania, and the widow of the glo-

---

* *Saxon Chronicle* as translated by the REV. J. INGRAM, B.D. p. 154. We omit in the text a copy of the charter of Peterborough as it is published in the Saxon Chronicle, (see INGULPH., pp. 46, 47.) We cannot refrain however from copying the following account given in the *Saxon Chronicle* of the early abbots of Peterborough.

"This" (the charter) "was done in the year after our Lord's nativity 972, the 16th year of this king. Then bought the abbot Aldulf lands rich and many, and much endowed the minster withall; and was there until Oswald, archbishop of York, was dead; and then he was chosen to be archbishop. Soon after another abbot was chosen of the same monastery, whose name was Kenulf, who was afterwards bishop of Winchester. He first made the wall about the minster, and gave it the name of Peterborough, which before was Medhamstead. He was there until he was appointed bishop of Winchester, when another abbot was chosen of the same monastery whose name was Elfsy, who continued about fifty winters afterwards. It was he who took up St. Kyneburga and St. Kyneswitha, that lay at Castor, and St. Tibba, that lay at Ryhall; and brought them to Peterborough, and offered them all to St. Peter in one day, and preserved them all the while he was there." INGRAM'S *Saxon Chronicle*, pp. 156, 157.

rious Ethelwold, lord of the East Angles.* By this marriage he had two sons, Edmund and Ethelred. By a former marriage with Agelfleda the fair, and who was also designated "the Eneda" (duck), the daughter of lord Ordmær, he was father to Edward, afterwards king and martyr. By saint Wlfthrytha, he became the father of Edgitha, a virgin who devoted herself to the service of God.†

---

* F. WIGORN, p. 606. ROG. DE WENDOV., vol. i. p. 410, places this marriage in the year 963, the Saxon Chronicle in the year 965. The last date is manifestly a mistake, as the name of Elfrida appears to a charter in the year 964. See LAPPENBERG, vol. ii. p. 138, note 2.

† F. WIGORN, p. 606. In many of the ancient chronicles there are to be found statements respecting king Edgar which are purposely omitted by us—first, because if true, they are unsuited for these pages as giving details of impurities; secondly, because they are supposed to be the mere fancies of ballad writers, (MALMSBURY, *Gest. Reg.*, lib. ii. § 148,) and to have found their greatest credence in England, at a period when the country was ruled by Norman kings, and the desire was entertained to underrate the value and depreciate the merits of every one who had rendered himself illustrious amongst the Anglo Saxons. MALMSBURY, (*Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 157) in giving circulation to such stories, attributes them to those envious of the glories and greatness of Edgar: "Sunt qui ingenti ejus gloriæ nævum tentent apponere;" and Lappenberg, no friend to the monks, nor to their protector Edgar, candidly admits, as the result of his enquiries, on this subject, that such tales "may have been *propagated* by the naturally ill-disposed secular clergy, and *embellished* at a later period by the Normans, in degradation of the Anglo Saxon rulers." (*Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 138). That Edgar violated the laws of chastity upon one occasion there can be no doubt—see *Vit. S. Dunst.*, c. viii. § 45. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 372. In so doing he was charged with sacrilege, but from that crime his memory is cleared by Roger de Wendover, (vol. i. p. 140), who speaks of the mother of Editha—"certum est sanctimonialem tunc non fuisse, sed timore regis puellam parvulam se velasse." For this sin, St. Dunstan imposed upon his sovereign a penance of seven years—during

In the course of the same year 964, the priests were expelled from the old and new minster at Winchester, as well as from Chertsey and Milton, and their places supplied with monks.*

The venerable father Turketul (in the year 966), hearing that his former intimate friend Dunstan was arch-

---

all which time he was to fast two days in each week—"jejunium in hebdomada biduale transigeret"—to give large alms to the poor—"avitos pauperibus thesauros large dispergeret"—to found a convent for nuns, and for the whole of the seven years not to wear the crown—"ut in toto hoc spatio coronam regni non gestaret." (OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst., c. viii. § 45. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 372).

A main inducement with us for believing that Edgar's character has been maligned is, that we find the hagiologists refer to him in terms of praise, see BRITHFRITH, Vit. S. Dunst., c. v. § 24. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 354. WOLSTAN, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. ii. § 16, *Act. Sanct.*, (August), vol. i. p. 92. EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald, *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 200. *De S. Edgar*, c. i. § 3, 7. *Act. Sanct.*, (July), vol. iii. p. 660.

That St. Edgar the confessor was not the only one of the Saxon saints whose virtues were denied, and whose merits repudiated by the Normans, we have the proof, in an interesting anecdote told respecting St. Ethelbert king of the East Angles. See *Mirac. S. Ethelbert*, § 19. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 708.

* *Sax. Chron.* See ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 411. F. WIGORN, p. 606. W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 244.

In ALFORD, vol. iii. § 1, 8, pp. 332, 333, 334, will be found the charter bestowed upon St. Oswald by king Edgar, for purifying Worcester, from those "clerici," who in the words of the charter —"magis elegerunt, cum sui ordinis periculo; et Ecclesiastici beneficii dispendio, suis uxoribus adhærere, quam Deo castè et canonicè servire." Compare Alford's speculations as to the titles assumed by Edgar in his charters, vol. iii. p. 334, § 8, with PALGRAVE'S *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. pp. 569, 570, 627, 638, 641, 648, vol. ii. p. cxxxii.

bishop of Canterbury, and his relation Osketyll archbishop of York, he travelled up from Croyland to London to visit them, and was received by both with marks of the deepest affection; for Dunstan remembered well the former kindnesses of the abbot, and Osketyll was rejoiced to recognize in the good man one who was so closely allied to him. Both obtained from king Edgar, in the eighth year of his reign, a charter confirmatory of all the privileges bestowed upon Croyland monastery.*

The monastery being thus protected by a charter from exterior annoyances of every kind—whether from king or bishop; the venerable father Turketul now wasted with years, determined never again to go abroad into the world, but to pass his days amongst the seniors of the monastery, in constant investigations and discussions respecting the ancient state and rules of the monastery.† It was in accordance with the investigations that were then made, that regulations were established for the management of Croyland monastery, and which it was resolved at the same time should be ever afterwards strictly adhered to.‡ The monks were divided by Turketul into three grades, viz., the *juniors*, who, from the time of entering the monastery, until they were twenty-four years there, were to discharge

---

* Ingulph. *Hist.*, pp. 41, 42. The charter is given at length, as well as the prohibition by ecclesiastic censures against any violation of the rights of the monastery, see pp. 42, 45.

† Ibid., p. 48.

‡ Ibid. The rules in the text, it is to be observed, are abridged from the original. The words of the author alone are given; but not all the words, as what is desired is to convey an accurate notion of the lives of the old monks without encumbering our pages with minute details.

all the duties, in the choir, cloisters, and refectory, singing, reading, serving, and diligently and devoutly discharging all the labours imposed on them by their superiors.* The monks who had completed twenty-four years in the monastery, dating from the time they became monks, were for the sixteen following years to hold the second grade. These were relieved from the minor labours of the community, but were to discharge all the other duties, with the advantage however of being occasionally relieved in the performance of them by the juniors. In the third grade were those who were called *the seniors*, and who from their fortieth to their fiftieth years in the monastery were relieved from all the labours of choir, cloister, and refectory, with the exception of singing at high mass. Upon completing their forty-second year, they were relieved from all out-of-door work, and were no longer to act as purveyors, butlers, alms-distributors, cooks, gardeners, unless in case of a pressing necessity, when some of the duties of those offices might be imposed upon them by the abbot, or some of the seniors.† When however a monk had passed his

* INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 48. (Gale), p. 885. (Script. post Bedam.) Punishments were allocated to those who conducted themselves unworthily as monks, and who were incited to do so by pride in their science, and learning, "elatus alicujus artis scientia, vel confisus literarum copia."

† This rule serves to shew how strictly were enforced the regulations for manual labours by the monks. See MARTENE, lib. iv. c, vi, vol. iv. p. 23. *Vit. S. Ægidius*, c. i. § 78. *Act. Sanct.*, (April,) vol. iii. p. 238. In the same volume will be found the account of a monk who acted as cook in a monastery, and whose merits were testified by numerous miracles, see *Processus de B. Jacobo Bitectens, Appendix*, § 95, p. 545, see also pp. 537, 544 same volume.

fifty years in the monastery he was to be designated 'Sempecta,'* and a goodly chamber in the infirmary of the monastery was to be assigned to him by the prior, and there he was to have a clerk or page specially devoted to his service. A junior monk was also to be made the associate of a sempecta, and this as much for the instruction of the young as for the solace of the old monk—and to both, the prior was to allocate from the kitchen of the infirmary the same description of food which was given to those in delicate health. As to the sempecta, he was, whether sitting or walking, to be completely his own master—coming in, and going out as he pleased—through choir, and cloister, and refectory, and all the other buildings of the monastery, with his frock, or without his frock, in such or whatsoever manner as he pleased; and nothing unpleasant regarding the concerns of the monastery was ever to be said in his hearing, and no one was, on any account, to give him the slightest offence; but he was to be permitted, in perfect peace and quietness, to go on thus to the end of his days.†

The statutes, made on this occasion were publicly promulgated by the abbot Turketul in his chapter, and there readily and approvingly assented to by all, and were then by his order written at the end of the rules of St. Benedict, so that every one who wished might read and know the law, and none, through ignorance, contravene it.‡

---

* See as to the word 'sempecta,' DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. p. 94, note, col. ii, (Ellis's Edit.)

† INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 49, (Gale), pp. 885, 886, (Script. p. Bedam.) There is omitted a description of the duties assigned to the prior and archdeacon of the monastery.

‡ Ibid., p. 50, (Gale), p. 886, (Script. p. Bed).

No sooner had these statutes been promulgated, than Turketul, who was broken down with years, and who suffered much from the wounds he had received, and the labours he had undergone, when he was in the maturity of manhood, began to prepare for the moment of his death; and as a good workman for the Lord, he longingly looked forward to the evening which was to bring him the reward for his toil. His prayers, his devotions, and his masses became, if it were possible, more fervent, more frequent, and more devout. His hours were passed in meditation, and in discipline—all the poor amongst his indigent dependents were relieved—all mendicants and strangers were supplied with food*—every other work of charity was scrupulously attended to—this life became hourly more abhorrent to him—the life to come more eagerly thirsted for by him; and whilst every rule was fulfilled, and every commandment obeyed, still did he always proclaim himself as a useless servant, and still with all the earnestness of heart and soul, appeal to the mercy of Christ, daily knocking at the gates of Paradise, and proving, by every Christian act of his fervent piety, his worthiness to be admitted amongst the blessed.†

As to boys and youths, the sons of noble persons, who had been sent to the monks, as well as to the Pegland clerks, to be instructed, Turketul, in his anxiety that nothing should be neglected with regard to their education, visited them at least once every day, to watch the progress of the

---

* "Omnes pauperes de suis indigentiis relevare, mendicantibus et egenis omnibus victualia præstare," p. 50, (Gale), p. 886, (Script. p. Bed.)

† Ingulph. *Hist.*, p. 50, (Gale), p. 887, (Script. p. Bedam.)

learning and studies of each, and he always made his servant carry with him figs, or dried grapes, or nuts, or almonds, and very often apples and pears, and such other little dainty gifts for the boys, as a reward for the studious, and prizes for the scholars who excelled their fellows at their tasks, and thus he incited them to learn not so much by scolding and stripes, as by his prayers and boons.*

As to the sempectas of the monastery, they were always held in the highest veneration by him, and were daily consoled by his familiar converse with him, and as duly honoured by some special present forwarded to each from his own table. The first of these sempectas at that time was a man decrepit with age, and who had long passed the usual span allotted to the life of mortals—this was Sir Clarenbald, who was one hundred and sixty eight years old, when he was destined to receive from the hand

---

* "Et afferente secum aliquo servitore ficus vel uvas passas, vel nuces, vel amygdala, vel sæpius poma et pyra, vel alia talia munuscula, bene laborantes remunerabat præ ceteris, ut omnes ad diligentius insistendum suis lectionibus, non verbis tantum vel verberibus, sed sæpissime precibus, et præmiis provocaret." INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 50, (Gale) p. 887. (Script. p. Bed.)

This picture of the old warrior, chancellor, and worn out abbot, standing with his basket of sweetmeats in the midst of the boys' school, and tempting them to learn with his ruddy apples, and ripe pears will, it is hoped, win for the memory of the old monks a sigh and a prayer.

A great friend of the monks—and a contemporary of Turketul's resembled the abbot in his taste for instructing the young. This is the account given by his biographer, of St. Ethelwold, the founder of many monasteries:—

"*Dulce* namque erat ei adolescentes et juvenes *semper docere*, et latinos libros anglice eis solvere, et regulas grammaticæ artis ac metricæ rationis tradere, *et jocundis alloquiis* ad meliora hortari." WOLSTAN, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 4, § 31. *Act. Sanct.* (August), vol. i. p. 94.

of the Lord the reward of his very long labours. No sooner was Clarenbald confined to his bed by his last illness, than the abbot Turketul took upon himself the duties of his servant—lying down by his side, and reciting in the ears of the dying the service, and performing even every menial office for the sick man, with the alacrity of a youth. And when the monk had been anointed and died, his body was buried with all the due and solemn offices of the church in the choir. The year following, Sir Swarling died in the hundred and forty second year of his age; and upon him also similar care and attendance were bestowed by the venerable Turketul, and a like reverence was shown for his memory, when his remains were deposited by the side of Sir Clarenbald. The same occurred with Sirs Brun and Aïo, who were all three buried in the same year —that being the fourteenth year in the reign of the illustrious Edgar. In the following year died the venerated Turgar, in the one hundred and fifteenth year of his age. These five sempectas had seen the two monasteries—both the old one that had been destroyed by the Danes, and the new one, that had been recently constructed.*

A short time after due celebration of S. S. Peter's and Paul's day, in the year 975, the venerable father and abbot Turketul was, in consequence of the extreme heat of the dog days, seized with fever, against which he painfully struggled for three days; but on the fourth was compelled to take to his bed. He then had all the members of the monastery summoned to his room, and these, when collected together, amounted to forty-seven monks, and four lay brothers. There, in presence of all the commu-

* Ingulph. *Hist.*, p. 51, (Gale,) p. 887. (Script. p. Bed).

nity, he directed Sir Egelric, his steward, to exhibit whatever was the amount of wealth possessed by the establishment, whether in money, or valuables, or jewels, and he required that the steward should bind himself by deed to be responsible to the monastery for all, after his (Turketul's) decease. The treasures of the monastery were then brought forward and they were found to amount nearly to ten thousand pounds. As to the relics, they were not only numerous, but very precious, and all had been presented to Turketul when he was the king's chancellor, and when the good will and friendly offices of the king of England were sought for by such potentates as Henry, emperor of the Germans; Hugh, king of the French; Louis, prince of Aquitaine, and by many other lords and princes. Amongst these, was one peculiarly prized by Turketul—it was the thumb of Bartholomew the Apostle—it was always carried about with him by Turketul, and he was accustomed to bless himself with it in moments of perils, in storms, and whenever there was lightning.* The duke of Beneventum had given this to the emperor when the emperor was first girded by him with a sword as a knight. The emperor had afterwards bestowed it upon the chancellor. There were also hairs of the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, bestowed upon him by the king of France, and which hairs were enclosed in a jewel case of gold. There was also one of the bones of St. Leodogar, bishop and martyr, given to Turketul by the prince of Aquitaine, and along with these many others, some of which were afterwards dispersed abroad, and others preserved in the monastery

* "Et cum illo, in omni periculo et tempestate et fulgure se signaret." INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 51. Gale) p. 887. (Script. p. Bed).

to the times of the Norman kings. There were also a great many vessels both silver and gold, and which were desired to be kept, in case of necessity, for the benefit of the community. All these were confided to the care of the steward and procurator of the monastery.*

Day by day the state of Turketul became worse, until at length it was perceived that the last fatal moment was fast approaching. He then participated in the sacred mysteries of Christ, and upon the crucifix, which was taken out of the church, being brought to him to kiss, he received and embraced it with both his arms—and ah! then it would be difficult to tell what sighs, what groans, what tears burst from him, as he again and again pressed it to his lips—nor how devout were the expressions to which he gave utterance as he descanted upon each of the wounds of the Saviour—expressions which compelled every by-stander to melt into tears—expressions that never ceased to live in the hearts of the monks, and that ever afterwards remained as an indestructible memorial of his piety.† The day before his death he made a brief address to the monks who were present. The subject of his discourse was as to a due observance of the rules of the order, upon the fraternal

---

* Ingulph. *Hist.*, p. 51. (Gale), p. 887. (Script. p. Bed.)

† "Crucem, quam de ecclesia ante conventum ministri attulerant, datam ad osculandum ambobus brachiis amplexatus, quantis suspiriis, quot lacrymis, quibus singultibus, et quam frequenter osculatus fuerit, paucis non potest explicari; tam devota verba ad singula Christi vulnera dixit," &c. &c. Ingulph. *Hist.*, p. 52. (Gale) pp. 887, 888. (Script. p. Bed.) This abbot venerated the relics of saints; and the use he made of the crucifix on his death-bed will, it is hoped, demonstrate that he was not guilty of idolatry,

charity that should animate all its members, of the avoidance of neglect in all things—spiritual as well as temporal, and of a due regard to their fire—(but whether it was the fire of charity, or that he wished to forewarn them against the subsequent conflagration of their monastery, it cannot now be affirmed; all that is known is, that he frequently, and fervently, and as it would seem prophetically, repeated the expression—"ignem vestrum optime custodite.")* At last, however, he dismissed the brethren, commending himself to the prayers of all, bidding a last farewell to all, and humbly beseeching of God to look down with mercy upon them all. The vital strength departed, languor grew upon him, and on the day of the year devoted to the translation of the remains of St. Benedict, his patron, and upon the completion of his office, and in the fulness of his years, he passed from this world to his Father, from the labours of his abbacy to the bosom of Abraham; and he was buried in the church which he had built from the foundation, and his body was placed in the grave, on the right side of the high altar, by the hands of the neighbouring abbots, Ædulph of Burgh, and Godman of Thorney—the deceased being then in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and the twenty-seventh of his monkhood.†

A due and diligent investigation, wisely and deliberately conducted, had been made by King Edgar, into the lives and habits of bishops, clerical persons, and monks. Upon

---

* There is great simplicity in this conjecture of the monk.

† Ingulph. *Hist.* p. 52. (Gale). p. 888. (Script. p. Bedam.)

the result of this investigation being made known to him, the king summoned to his presence the heads of all the churches and monasteries, and then addressed to them a discourse, which was framed in the following terms :—*

"Since it has pleased the Lord to bestow great and "manifold blessings upon us, it is but fitting, most reve- "rend fathers, that we should endeavour to correspond by "our works to His innumerable blessings and benefits. "It is not by our sword that we possess the land, nor by "our arms alone that we have been able to protect our- "selves; but our salvation and our safety are in His "right hand alone, since He has been pleased to take pity "on us. It is but just, since all things are subject to "Him, that we too should prostrate ourselves in heart and "in soul at His feet; and that we should labour to render "all who are subject to ourselves obedient to His laws.

* "Cumque diligenter episcoporum, clericorum, monachorum, vitam et mores investigatione prudentissima didicisset, vocatis ad se ecclesiarum et monasteriorum patribus, cum eis hujusmodi sermonem habuit." ETHELRED, AB. RIEVAL. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.* p. 360.

A council was held at Winchester in the year 966, (see Baronius, vol. xvi. p. 164, § 6,) at which, important regulations were made with reference to monasteries, and these under the sanction of the king—the words of the preamble to those regulations or statutes corresponding closely with those used by Ethelred—"tali igitur, ac tanto studio, præfatus Rex magnopere delectatus; arcana quæque, diligenta curâ examinans, synodale concilium Wintoniæ fieri decrevit; *illucque verba exhortatoria ac pacifica*," &c. &c. (See ALFORD, *Annal. Eccl. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 341, § 19.) It is the apparent coincidence between these two authorities—Ethelred and the rules for the management of monasteries adopted in 966—that induces us to believe that we are correct in placing under this date the speech of King Edgar for the reformation of church abuses. See SPELMAN'S *Concilia*, vol. i. pp. 476, 479, 490, 492. LABBÆUS, pp. 696, 698, 721, 724. Dr. Lingard, in his Anglo Saxon Antiquities, vol. ii. p. 288, and note 5, doubts the authenticity of the speech ascribed to King Edgar in the text,

"It is an important portion of my duty to look to lay-
"men; equitably to decide their suits; justly to judge
"between each person and his neighbour; to punish the
"sacrilegious; to repress the rebellious; to guard the
"weak against the strong; to protect the needy and the
"poor from their oppressors and their despoilers. But in
"addition to the discharge of this duty, I am also solicitous
"that the ministers of churches, the confraternities of
"monks, and the communities of virgins, should have not
"only what is necessary for their subsistence, but also
"that their peacefulness should be provided for, and their
"tranquillity secured. An examination into the morals
"of all such persons as these belongs to you; it is for you
"to see that they live continently; that they conduct
"themselves honestly towards those in the world; that
"they are careful in the performance of their holy offices;
"that they are assiduous in the instruction of the people;
"that they are temperate in their meals; decorous in their
"dress; discreet in their behaviour.

"With all due respect for you, reverend fathers, I say,
"that if you had carefully and anxiously scrutinized into
"these matters, it is not possible that such horrid and
"abominable tales respecting clerical persons should have
"reached our ears.* I pass by in silence those particulars
"respecting them, alike unworthy of their calling and dis-
"graceful to the tonsure; their wantonness in attire, their
"impropriety in action, their looseness in language; ex-

* "Non tam horrenda et abhominanda ad aures nostras de *clericis* pervenissent." ETHELRED. Here the distinction is again made between "clerks" and other purely religious persons. In this place it manifestly refers to *the canons*, whose infamies had scandalized every person of religious feeling in the country.

"terior signs proclaiming the sad condition of the inner "man. And in addition to all this, how lamentably have "they neglected their attendance on the divine offices; "so much so, that they could scarcely ever be induced to "be present at holy vigils; and even at the solemn sacri- "fice of the mass, it has seemed that they had rather con- "gregated to amuse themselves, than to respond to it by "their voices. I say, and I say it with a sad heart, that "these things make good men weep, and bad men rejoice. "I repeat also with a bitter sorrow—if indeed such facts "ought to be openly repeated—that they abandon them- "selves to feasting and to drunkenness, so that the houses "in which those clerics dwell might be mistaken for the "homes of harlots, and the booths of buffoons, for in such "may be heard the rattling of dice, the trampling of dan- "cers, the roaring chorus of singers, marking out the time "of their horrid vigils, which are constantly prolonged to "midnight. Thus—thus it is that the patrimonies of "kings, the alms of the poor, and, what is mightier than "all, the price of the precious blood of our Lord, are cast "away.

"Was it, I ask, for such purposes as these that our "fathers exhausted their treasures? that royal exchequers "were diminished in their revenues? Did the royal muni- "ficence bestow lands and goods upon the church of "Christ—that clerics should live in luxuries, that harlots "should be bedizened; that sumptuous feasts should be "eaten; that dogs, and falcons, and sporting gear should "be purchased? The brave men of my land cry out "against these things; the people murmur against them; "mimes laud them, and mountebanks rejoice in them; and

"you—will you any longer neglect to inquire into them? "will you continue to spare them—to wink at them?*

"Rise up then ye, who are priests,† rise up and justify "by your acts the ways and the justice of our God. The "time has come for proceeding against those who have "flagrantly violated the law of God. I grasp the sword "of Constantine, you hold the sword of Peter in your "hands.‡ Let us then join hand in hand—unite sword "with sword, that we may drive those lepers‖ out of the

---

* ETHELRED, pp. 360, 361. A portion of the king's speech is here omitted. It shows by a reference to various scriptural personages the necessity and justice of punishing those who violate the precepts of religion.

† "Æmulamini ô *sacerdotes*." Here again the distinction is to be marked between the particular term "sacerdotes," and the general term "clerici."

‡ "This distinction between the temporal and spiritual however —this true distinction always marked by the Catholic church— will be found conveyed in nearly the same words by Louis-le-debonnaire, when addressing Pope Stephen.

"Tu sacer Antistis, ego rex sum Christicolarum
"Servemus populum dogmate, lege, fide."

ERMOLD, lib. ii. v. 379, 380. *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. vi. p. 33.

‖ In his laws Edgar enforces the same principle, when urging the payment of their dues to "clean" priests. "Then will I that these God's dues stand every where alike in my dominion, and that the servants of God, who receive the moneys which we give to God *lead a pure life, that through their purity, they may intercede for us with God* (libban clænan life the hy thurh tha clænnyse us to Gode thingian mægen); and that I and my thanes direct our priests to that which the pastors of our souls teach us, that to our bishops, whom we ought never to disobey in any of those things which they teach us on the part of God, so that, through the obedience with which we obey them on account of God, we may merit that eternal life to which they fit us by doctrine, and with example of good works." Edgar's Laws, supplement § 1. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 115.

"camp, and purge the sanctuary of our Lord. Act then, "I beseech of you, diligently and at once, so that we may "not repent of having done that which we have done; "of having thrown away that which we have given, when "we find that it is applied not in the service of God, but "wasted with impunity in abandoned profligacy. Be "moved to act by the relics of saints whom they insult, "and by the venerable altars, in the presence of which "their insane pranks are played. Be moved by the "admirable devotion of our ancestors, whose donations "are abused in the extravagant whims of clerics.

"My ancestor, as you know, bestowed a tithe of all his "lands upon the churches and monasteries. My progeni- "tor, Alfred, of sacred memory, enriched the church, and "was unsparing in his donations from his treasures, his "patrimony, his goods, and his lands. It is not unknown "to you how much the church was enriched by my grand- "father Edward, with gifts from his paternal estate. It is "fitting also that you bear in mind what rich offerings "have been made on the altars of Christ by my father "and my brother.

"And now I address myself especially to you—my "father of fathers, Dunstan—behold, I beseech you, the "eyes of my father as they now shine upon you from "bright and heavenly regions; hear, with pity, as if his "words, and not mine, were sounding in your ears. You, "Dunstan, have been to me as a father, you have given to "me salutary counsel as to the construction of monas- "teries and the building of churches—you have been "my aider and co-operator in all things: you have been "chosen by me as the pastor and bishop of my soul, and "as the guardian of my morals. What is the time or the

"season in which I did not yield obedience to you? What "riches have I ever preferred to your counsels? What "possessions have I not repudiated when you suggested "that I should do so? What poor persons did you say "should be relieved, and I was not ready to aid them? "What gift did you ever declare should be made to "churches, and I hesitated in bestowing it? If it were "complained by you that monks or clerics stood in want "of assistance, I supplied it. You told me that alms "might win for the giver an everlasting reward, and that "such alms were never better bestowed than upon churches "and monasteries, because whatever remained, after afford- "ing due subsistence to those who devoted themselves to "the service of God, was distributed to the poor.

"And now—oh! wondrous alms—oh! precious pur- "chase for a soul's salvation! Oh! marvellous and effica- "cious remedy for our sins! strumpets are found reposing "in the cells of pilgrims, and our gifts decorate their "fingers with rings, and our donations clothe them with "fine linen and purple! Are such infamies as these to be "the fitting fruits of my alms-deeds? Can such as these "correspond with my hopes and your promises? I know "well that you will not run with the thief nor participate "in the portion of the adulterer. Your exhortations have "been disregarded, your prayers contemned, your threats "set at defiance. Your words, as words, have been de- "spised. The time then has come when the heavy stroke "of your stripes must be felt. You have here as your "assistant, the venerable father Ethelwold, bishop of "Winchester: You have also as your ally, the most reve- "rend father of the diocese of Worcester, Oswald. To "you then I confide this affair, in order that both by your

"episcopal censure, and the royal authority, you may re-
"move evil doers from our churches, and supply their
"places with those who live in accordance with the ordi-
"nances of religion.*

In the year 966,† Thored, the son of Gunner, plundered Westmoreland,‡ and the same year Oslac was appointed to the ealdormanship of (Northumberland.)§ It was about this period that king Edgar held a council at York of the Northumbrian lords, when many excellent regulations for the better government of the principality were determined upon; amongst which was, that the ealdormanship of Northumbria, previously confided by his uncle Edred to Osulf, should be divided for the future into two ealdormanships.‖ Osulf being now dead, the king was unwilling to assign as an hereditary possession the entire of the district to a single person alone, lest the circumstance should

---

* ETHELRED. AB. RIEVAL. *Geneal. Reg. Ang.*, pp. 360, 361, 362. This truly pious discourse, most unlike to those documents which in modern times have been designated a "king's speech," was followed by great and beneficial changes. See ALFORD, *Annal. Eccles. Ang.*, vol. iii. pp. 340, 348, § 17, 45, in which are detailed St. Dunstan's rules for the regulation of monasteries, as well as those rules which were adopted for the management of Hyde monastery.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ An expedition into Westmoreland, was most probably undertaken by order of Eadger, the name of Thored appearing at an earlier period as master of the royal household, and later amongst those of the royal commanders." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 141, see note 2 and 3, in same page.

§ *Sax. Chron.*

‖ WALLINGFORD, *Chron.* p. 544.

serve as an inducement to the Northumbrians to aspire to their ancient independence. It was for this reason that he girded Oslac with the sword of an ealdorman over the land, which is comprised between the Humber and the Tees. From the Tees to Mereforth, that is the maritime part of Deira, he confided the province as an ealdormanship to Eadulf, surnamed Ewelthild. Thus were two kingdoms changed into two ealdormanships, and as such remained ever afterwards subjected to the power and control of the kings of England.*

Edgar the pacific, in the year 967,† placed a community of nuns in the monastery of Rumsey,‡ which had been constructed by his grandfather Edward the elder. Over this community he appointed St. Merwinna to act as abbess.§

---

* WALLINGFORD, *Chron.* p. 544.

† *Sax. Chron.*

‡ The church of this monastery still remains. CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 167. "The monastery was valued at £528. 8s. 10½d. yearly, now worth £10,568. 19s. 2d.: granted 38 Henry VIII to John Bellew and R. Pigot." COBBETT. See DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 506—510.

§ F. WIGORN, p. 606, ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 412. S. DUNELM, p. 158. See ALFORD, *Annal.*, vol. iii. p. 353, § 3, pointing out the distinction between the convent of Rumsey in Hants, and the monastery for monks at Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire.

It is suggested by Spelman, vol. i. p. 441, that it was in this year the laws of Edgar affecting the church were adopted. Two different versions of these laws are published by the same author, see vol. i. pp. 443, 445, 446, 447. LABBÆUS, vol. ix. pp. 680,

In the year 968, monks were established in Exeter by

---

682. As to the canons of Edgar, see SPELMAN, vol. i. pp. 447, 476; LABBÆUS, vol. ix. pp. 682, 696; WILKINS, pp. 82, 97.

One of the laws of Edgar to which, perchance, objection may now be felt in England was the enforcement, (see § 3), under severe penalties of the payment of Peter's pence to Rome. "Denarius autem in domos singulos impositus, ante festum Divi Petri redditur;" but none however will be felt for the regulation which commanded the due and decent observance of the sabbath: "docemus etiam, ut in diē solis, quisque abstineat a mercatura et popularibus comitiis," (see THORPE's *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 112, § 3, 4); nor that priests should be teachers of youth—"ut sacerdotes erudiant juventutem:" nor that priests should be so bountiful in alms-giving as to encourage others, by their example, to be charitable—"ut sacerdotes ita distribuant populi eleemosynas: ut et Deum reddant magis propitium, et populum ad eleemosynas procliviiorem;" nor that priests should live purely, and chastely, and have no other spouse but the church: "ut nullus sacerdos mulierum consortium plus æquō diligat: sed *propriam suam uxorem diligito; id est* ECCLESIAM."

The manner in which the church enforced the observance of the sabbaths and of holydays, is worthy of particular observation, because Sundays and holydays then afforded a compulsory respite from labour to the poorest of the poor—the slave class.

"And let the festivals of every Sunday be kept *from noontide of the Saturday, till the dawn of Monday*, on peril of the 'wite,' which the doom-book specifies; and every other mass-day, as it may be commanded." *Edgar's Laws.* THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 112, c. i. § 4.

Such was the wide interpretation given to the word "Sabbath," by the monkish churchmen of the tenth century. It afforded great relaxation to the poor; but these churchmen were not so indulgent to the pleasures of the rich. King Edgar himself was rebuked by St. Dunstan for indulging in the pleasures of the chace on a Sunday. The king acknowleged his error, and abandoned that which must have been to him a great recreation. "Ex hac sumpta occasione regi prohibens ne die dominico ulterius venatum pergeret; quam correptionem sanctus Rex benigne suscepit, et de cetero observavit." *Syllog. Hist. de S. Edgar*, c. i. § 7. *Act. Sanct.*, (Julii), vol. ii. p. 660. Modern Sabbath legislation is conducted in a far different spirit from that which monks ever approved of.

Edgar, who placed over them as abbot a very religious man named Sideman.*

Aldred bishop of Lindisfarne died this year.† He was succeeded by Alfsius a man profoundly learned in ecclesiastical affairs,‡ and who was consecrated by Osketyll, archbishop of York.§

King Edgar, in the year 967, gave directions that all Thanet-land should be plundered.‖ This punishment was inflicted on the inhabitants, because they had contemned the royal rights and privileges. The punishment was however not enforced in the same manner that it would be by an enemy; but as became a king who chastises his subjects for the crimes they have committed, and who adjudges that an evil deed be followed by a dolorous penalty.¶ Some trading persons belonging to York had landed at Thanet, who were instantly assailed by the islanders, and robbed of every particle of their cargo. Edgar, incensed at the perpetration of such a crime, deprived all who were participators in it of the entire of their

---

* F. WIGORN, p. 606.

† Ibid.

‡ ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 412.

§ S. DUNELM, *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. ii. c. xx, p. 26. The former had rendered himself loved by his veneration for the relics of St. Cuthbert. The name of the latter will be found to occur again in this history. See ALFORD *Annal.*, vol. iii. p. 355, § 13. The same author assigns to this year the bestowal of a charter on the monastery of Winchester, vol. iii. p. 354, § 5, 9.

‖ *Sax. Chron.*

¶ H. HUNT, *Hist.*, lib. v. p. 356, BROMTON, *Chron.* p. 867.

worldly substance, and caused a few of the plunderers to be executed.*

It was in the year 969 that Edgar, king of the English issued his precept to St. Dunstan archbishop of Canterbury, St. Oswald, bishop of Worcester, and St. Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, that they should expel the clerks, and place monks in the larger monasteries erected in all parts of Mercia.† We must bear in mind, that into such a state of lamentable disorder had clerical persons fallen in some places, that so far were they from being superior to laymen in their morals, that they were much beneath them by their vicious conduct.‡ For this reason the bishops had addressed themselves to Dunstan—exposed the evils that were then prevalent, and sought from him, as primate, a fitting and efficacious remedy. Against such wicked men his archiepiscopal decree was expressed in these words: "They must either live in accordance with the canons, or "they must be expelled from their churches." In pursuance of this decree the canons (clerici) were, because they would not comply with the proposed condition, expelled from several churches, and those so expelled relying upon the interest of their relatives, complained of the conduct of the archbishop, and prayed for a hearing in presence of

---

* Roc. de Wend., vol. i. pp. 414, 415.

† F. Wigorn, p. 606.

‡ Osbern, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. viii. § 46. *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai), vol. iv. p. 372. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii, p. 112.

the king.* Dunstan, who would refuse no request that appeared to be grounded on reason, met his adversaries at a witan assembled for this purpose in Winchester.† And there he, in accordance with the judgment of the entire witan, obtained the victory over his opponents. The appellants, conscious that they had no claim in equity, next sought to avail themselves of the protection of the king, and the favours of the nobles, and therefore prayed earnestly of the archbishop that those who had been substituted for themselves might be expelled, and they who had been expelled might be restored. When an appeal was thus made to him, the holy man appeared to hesitate—to such requests he gave no response, and whilst he was still silent, a miraculous circumstance, and such as has been unknown in the annals of the world occurred! The figure of the person of our Lord affixed to the standard of the cross, and which was placed on an elevated position in the palace,

---

* The person particularly complained of on this occasion for acting on the decree of the archbishop was St. Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, who, presenting the canons with the cowls of monks, told them that they must either assume with these the morals of the monks, or abandon the monastery. Those who refused were expelled, and appealed to the king. EADMER, Vit. S. Dunstan, *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 219. See LINGARD's *Anglo Saxon Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 292, with the authorities cited in note 1. We may here add that those bad men had attempted to deprive Ethelwold of life by administering poison to him. See WOLSTAN, Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. ii. § 19. *Act. Sanct.*, (August), vol. i. p. 92.

† The date of this council is fixed by HENSCHENIUS, *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.), vol. iii. p. 754, note *n*, as well as by Turner, in the year 969. See *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 264, and note 22, for authorities. Others, Butler, and Wharton, place it in the year 968. See *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v. p. 648. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 112. Eadmer states that at this witan, not only the king, but also the queen Elfrida was present. "Rex cum sua conjuge adest." *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 219.

gave forth the sounds of a human voice, and silenced by its utterance the tongues of all, as it pronounced the words—"*Let it not be done**—*let it not be done*:"† "*Well have you judged, ill would you change.*" Upon hearing these words, the king and all present were at first terrified almost to death, but then recognizing the prodigy, they filled the air with shouts of praise to the honour of God.‡ Whilst the members of the witan still trembled with the commotion that had been excited, Dunstan spoke to them and said: "What more, my brethren, do you re-"quire? Have you not heard the Divine sentence pro-"nounced, with respect to the matter now before you?" All with one voice replied to him—"We have, in sooth, heard it."§

With this decision the adversaries of Dunstan were silenced. During their lives they did not renew the conflict; but it was again, and at a subsequent period, revived by their children.‖ Then, however, the canons were on all sides driven out of the monasteries, and the monks, who

---

* "Absit hoc ad fiat, absit hoc ut fiat." OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. viii, § 46.

† "Non fiet, non fiet. Judicastis bene, mutaretis non bene." EADMER, Vit. S. Dunst. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 219.

Bromton, who records this miracle as having occurred at a different period in the life of St. Dunstan, states that in memory of the fact, the following lines were inscribed on the crucifix:

"Humano more Crux præsens edidit ore
"Cœlitus effata, quæ perspicis hic subarata."

Chron., p. 870.

‡ OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst., c. viii, § 46.

§ EADMER, Vit. S. Dunst., *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 219, 220.

‖ OSBERN, Vit. S. Dunst., c. 8, § 46. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 372. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 112.

had formerly been wanderers, were collected together; then was the head of brass, that the artificers of evil had imposed upon the golden statue of religion, removed, and cast down; then were the practises of ancient piety renewed; for then were the Hebrews enriched, and the Egyptians despoiled; then was the mŏnastic order, previously depressed, again elevated; then its glory, which had been lessened, again magnified; then apprehension was succeeded by security, the clouds of adversity dispersed, and the serene, sun-like rays of a long-prayed-for tranquillity shone down upon, and illuminated the Church of England.*

---

* *Hist. Ramesiens*, c. 14, pp. 393, 394.

The change—the real and pure reform in religion here effected—was accomplished with the approval, and sanctioned by the authority, of the pontiff, Pope John XIII., whose letter to King Edgar is still extant. (Alford, *Annal.* vol. iii. p. 349, § 4.) "It was about this time," (a. 970) says Baronius, quoting the words of the preamble, "that by the authority of Pope John, the archbishop Dunstan collected a general council, and by their decree determined that all canons, priests, deacons, and subdeacons, should either live chastely, or resign their churches." (*Annal. Eccles.* vol. xvi. p. 200, § 3.) But whilst these things were passing in England, there were other church-reformers busily engaged on the continent. Adalberon, archbishop of Rheims, appeared at the council of Ingelheim in the year 948, to make a complaint of the decayed discipline of the clergy. The following were the words in which he gave expressions to his feelings:—

"Adhuc," inquit, "nostro ordini inimica proferam. In quo quidam dinoscuntur, quibus mos inolevit, ut soli a monasteriis egrediantur, soli foris nullo sui operis teste maneant, et quod pessimum est, absque fratrum benedictione et exeant, et sine ea redeant. Unde non dubium est, eos facilius posse falli, quos fratrum orantium benedictio non munit. Inde est quod turpitudo vitæ, morum pravitas, proprietatis peculium, nobis a *calumniantibus* intenduntur. Unde etiam necesse est, ut his calumniis subdamur, cum repulsioni testes habere non possimus. Hoc quoque vestra censura prohibeat.' Sinodus dixit: "Prohibeatur." Et memo-

St. Oswald in the course of this year (969), was able

---

rabilis metropolitanus: "Hoc quoque," inquit, "nostra auctoritate prohibemus." RICHER. *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 36.

As far as Adalberon's influence extended, he carried, it will be seen, the reforms he desired into effect:

"Canonicos etiam, qui in propriis hospiciis degentes tantum sua curabant, jure communitatis vivere instruxit. Unde et claustrum monasterio addidit, in quo die morantes cohabitarent, necnon et dormitorium, ubi noctu in silentio quiescerent, refectorium quoque ubi de communi considentes reficinentur. Legesque ascripsit, ut orationis tempore in æcclesia nihil nisi signo peterent, præter quod necessitatis afferet inpulsio; cibum una taciturni caperent; post prandium, in gratiarum actione laudes Deo decantarent; completorio vero expleto, silentium usque laudes matutinas nullatenus violarent. Jam horoscopo pulsante excitati, ad laudes persolvendas sese prævire contenderent. Ante horam diei primam, libertas egrediendi a claustro nemini concessa erat, præter hos qui curis eorum insistebant. Et ne quis per ignorantiam quicquam faciendum relinqueret, sancti Augustini instituta patrumque decreta cotidie eis recitanda indixit. Monachorum quoque mores, quanta dilectione et industria correxit atque a seculi habitu distinxit sat dicere non est. Non solum enim religionis dignitate eos insignes apparere studuit, verum etiam bonis exterioribus augmentatos nullo modo minui prudens adegit." RICHER. *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 24, 25. See FRODOARD, *Hist.* lib. iv. c. 35; LABBÆUS, vol. ix. pp. 623, 625; and in same vol. extract from Frodoard, pp. 626, 632.

A modern author admits that the abuses which then were practised in the church had not the approval of the general body of the clergy;—

"Quelques membres du clergé semblant avoir supporté à regret la rigidité des règles canoniques et monastiques; mais l'empressement que mit toujours le corps entier à réprimer les désordres prouve, il faut le dire à son éloge, que ces désordres étoient une exception. GUADET, *Notice critique sur Richer, et sur son Histoire*, p. xci. (Societ. Hist. France.)

To correct abuses practised by any portion of the clergy was then, as now, to secure the favour, and win the admiration of the pontiff. It was thus that Adalberon, the church reformer, was received at Rome:—

"Et utpote vir nobilis et strenuus, et fama celibis vitæ omnibus clarus, a beatæ memoriæ Johanne papa cum multa reverentia exceptus est. A quo etiam post mutua colloquia jussus, in die natalitia Domini duodecim præcedentibus episcopis *missarum solempnia*

to carry into effect the wish he had long entertained—

---

celebravit. In tanta ejus gratia habitus, ut ab eo rogaretur petere, si quid optaret. RICHER. *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 25.

In England the church-reformers—the opponents to a married clergy—SS. Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald—were the promoters of learning. "Of these, however," says the anti-catholic Lappenberg, "*it must not be concealed* that they zealously devoted themselves to the instruction of the clergy." (*Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 171.) In this particular also we shall find a strong resemblance between them and Adalberon, of whom it is said:—

"Quo tempore, monachorum religio admodum floruit, cum eorum religionis peritissimus metropolitanus, hujus rei hortator esset et suasor. Et ut, nobilitati suæ in omnibus responderet, æcclesiæ suæ filios studiis liberalibus instruere utiliter quærebat." RICHER. *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 42.

The promoters of monasticism were the promoters of education, the protectors of learning, and the patrons of scholars. Such was Adalberon—the friend of the learned Gerbert—afterwards Pope Sylvester II. A brief reference to Gerbert will shew this; as well as how pert is the ignorance that affirms, as we have heard it stated at public meetings, and read in Literary Reviews, which professed to be very profound—"that school girls now a days know more of astronomy and geography than was known of them in the middle ages." A statement of facts in the life of Gerbert will refute this assertion; and it is the more necessary to state these facts, as Malmsbury has fallen into many errors with respect to Gerbert. See *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 167, 172. Gerbert was from a boy educated in a monastery. He was there made acquainted with the classics:

"Qui Aquitanus genere, in cœnobio sancti confessoris Geroldi a puero alitus, et grammatica edoctus est." RICHER. *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 43. His abbot, upon hearing that there were persons in Spain distinguished in science, permitted him to go to that country, where he soon found a bishop to act as his teacher, and under the prelate's instructions became acquainted with mathematics—"atque Hattoni episcopo instruendum commisit. Apud quem etiam in mathesi plurimum et efficàciter studuit." He afterwards proceeded to Rome, and was next taught logic by the archdeacon of Rheims: "Remensium archdiaconus, in logica clarissimus habebatur." Subsequently, at the request of the metropolitan of Rheims, he opened a school, which was soon filled by a crowd of disciples, anxious to master the different sciences. "Unde ab eo rogatus, discipulorum turmas artibus instruendas ei adhibuit." RICHER. lib, iii. c. 44,

that of expelling from Winchester cathedral those who

---

45. As to Gerbert's piety, charity, and learning, see *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. x. pp. 130, 131, 244, 301, 304, 324, 388, 389, 404, 408, 410, 417, 418. See also note by BOUQUET, p. 217, *d.*

Amongst other things which it is stated that the monk Gerbert taught to his scholars, were Aristotle's treatise, περι ἑρμηνειας, dialectics "ordine librorum," the isagogues of Porphirius, "inde etiam topica, id est argumentorum sedes." RICHER. lib. iii. c. 46. There we also find him reading and lecturing upon Virgil, Statius, and Terence, as poets; upon Juvenal, Persius, and Horace, as satirists; and upon Lucan as an historical poet "historiographum," (c. 47.) He rendered his pupils complete orators, by teaching them the most perfect mode of argumentation—"ac sic ex arte agerent, ut præter artem agere viderentur, quod oratoris maximum videtur, (c. 48.) He taught arithmetic and music. And of the latter it is stated, "cujus genera in monocordo disponens, eorum consonantias sive simphonias in tonis ac semitoniis, ditonis quoque ac diesibus distinguens, tonosque in sonis rationabiliter distribuens, in plenissimam notitiam redegit," (c. 49.)

It is worthy of being known how the monk Gerbert taught astronomy. Richer states it was by the construction of a celestial globe. We have not space for a full description of the instrument; but a few lines will suffice to demonstrate its ingenuity, and the astronomical skill of its constructor:—"Imprimis enim mundi speram ex solido ac rotundo ligno argumentatus, minoris similitudine, majorem expressit. Quam cum duobus polis in orizonte obliquaret, signa septemtrionalia polo erectiori dedit, australia vero dejectiori adhibuit. * * Circuli quoque qui a Græcis paralleli, a Latinis æquestantes dicuntur, quos etiam incorporales esse dubium non est, hac ab eo arte comprehensi noscuntur. Effecit semicirculum recto diametro divisum. * * * Semicirculum vero a polo ad polum triginta partibus divisit," &c. &c. (c. 50, 51.)

Gerbert's teaching and construction of spheres did not stop here:—"Errantiumque siderum circuli cum intra mundum ferantur, et contra contendant, quo tamen artificio viderentur scrutanti non defuit. Imprimis enim speram circularem effecit; hoc est ex solis circulis constantem. * * * Intra hunc obliquum, errantium circulos miro artificio suspendit. Quorum absedas, et altitudines a sese etiam distantias, efficacissime suis demonstravit." (c. 52.) He made another sphere, which rendered a knowledge of the stars accessible to a person of the simplest capacity. Richer describes it, and then says: "Illud quoque in hoc divinum fuit,

refused to receive the monastic habit. The canons how-

---

quod cum aliquis artem ignoraret, si unum ei signum demonstratum foret, absque magistro cetera per speram cognosceret." Thus did he lavishly bestow his knowledge upon his pupils. "Inde etiam suos liberaliter instruxit." (c. 60.)

Upon the construction of these spheres, it is remarked by M. Guadet, the editor of Richer, (Societe de l'Histoire de France) "Cette sphère était extremêment ingenieuse en effet, et toutes celles dont vient de parler Richer, prouvent que *depuis le temps de Gerbert il s'est peu de progrès dans la confection de ce genre de globes.*" RICHER, *Hist.* vol. ii. p. 61, note 1.

These extracts are made for the purpose of shewing that even in the darkest periods of "the dark ages," the monks were not ignorant men; that, like to those orders, now best known in England and in Ireland, "the Jesuits," and "the Christian Brothers," they were the promoters of education; that now, as then, they were opposed to any persons presuming to call themselves clergy (clerici) and being married. To such an abuse pious monks have always been opposed. To such were Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald, opposed in England—to such was opposed Adalberon, the correspondent on literary subjects with Gerbert. (See GERBERT, *Epist.* § 8, in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.* vol. ix. p. 274.) And now, lest any doubt should exist as to *the religion* of Adalberon, the friend of learning, and a church-reformer, we must state that he commenced his archiepiscopal career by rendering conspicuous *his veneration for the relics of a Pope*:—

"Hic in initio post sui promotionem, structuris æcclesiæ suæ plurimum studuit. * * * Corpus quoque sancti Kalisti, *Papæ* et martyris, debito honore in ipso æcclesiæ ingressu, loco scilicet editiore, collocavit; ibique *altare dedicans*, oratorium fundendis Deo precibus commodissimum aptavit. *Altare præcipuum, crucibus aureis* insigniens, cancellis utrimque radiantibus obvelavit." RICHER, *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 22.

Adalberon gave a farther proof of his religious opinions: "Preter hæc etiam altare gestatorium non viliori opere effinxit. Super quod, sacerdote apud Deum agente, aderant quatuor evangelistarum *expressæ auro et argento imagines*, singulæ in singulis angulis stantes. * * * Facies vero AGNO IMMACULATO conversas intendebant. * * * Nec minus et arcam opere eleganti decoravit, in qua virgam et manna, *id est sanctorum reliquias*, operuit. Coronas quoque non minima inpensa fabrefactas in æcclesiæ decus suspendit. Quam fenestris diversas continentibus historias diluci-

ever this year, consenting to become monks, one amongst them named Wynsin, a man of great piety, was nominated by him, to act as dean in the monastery of Ramsey.* The blessed Oswald had from the first devoted himself to the correction of the canons in Worcester; but they perceiving that the observance of his admonitions would interfere with their habits of life, and tend to the practice of many austerities, closed their hearts to his words, and bestowed no attention upon his admonitions.† For this reason, Oswald had taken counsel with St. Dunstan, by whose prudence he was always guided, and then with the assent of the ever glorious king Edgar, he built a monastery in the chief town of his episcopal see, and placed in it a few monks.‡ This monastery was dedicated to the honour of the holy and ever Blessed Virgin mother of God. There were then at the same time, serving in the cathedral church, dedicated to St. Peter, the ever glorious prince of

---

datam, campanis mugientibus acsi tonantem dedit." RICHER, *Hist.* lib. iii. c. 23.

This church-reformer, upon being desired by the Pope to ask for whatever he might wish, replied, that all he required was a confirmation from the See of Rome of its privileges to the monastery of St. Remy, as well as of its lands to the abbey of St. Timothy, which was his own property, (quæ nostri juris est), and this *for the benefit of the poor*, (ut inde pauperibus administretur et memoria nostri servis Dei in cœnobio habetur.) RICHER, lib. iii. c. 26.

Wherever abuses have crept into the church, its reformers have at all times been men like to Dunstan in England, and Adalberon in France—pious catholics, the patrons of learning, and the friends of the poor.

* F. WIGORN, p. 606.

† EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 202.

‡ EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald. We omit here an account of a miracle which occurred in the construction of the monastery. See Vit. S. Oswald, c. 2, § 11. *Act. Sanct.*, (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 753.

the Apostles, the canons; and in the new church, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, the monks. The churches of both were by turns attended by the people; but not many days had elapsed, until the attendance at the cathedral church became less and less numerous; for all considered that there was more of piety manifested, more of due honour, and becoming worship to God, exhibited by the monks in all the sacred ceremonies of religion, than by the canons—and as the attendance on one church for the other was changed by the people, so also were their oblations. As the one lost, the other gained; as the one diminished, the other multiplied. The results were soon apparent—the oldest and most venerable of the canons, Wynsin, cast off all secular attachments and became a monk. Some too of the canons paying due attention to these facts, were filled with compunction, and at length feeling a fitting contempt for this world and all its secular pomps, submitted their necks to the yoke of Christ, and became themselves monks amongst the very monks they had before execrated! And in this manner, the chief monastery was transferred from the canons to the monks.*

The canon Wynsin, for the purpose of being more completely and thoroughly instructed in all matters relating to divine studies, was sent by Oswald to Ramsey monastery, in order, that when so taught, he might return to Worcester, and become the preceptor of the monks assembled there.† The monastery of Ramsey had been

* Abridged from EADMER, Vit. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 202, 203.

† "Super quo," (Wensino) "famulus Dei mire lætatus eum elapso brevi tempore studiis cœlestibus pleniter erudiendum Ra-

built by St. Oswald, with the assistance of a certain person named Aylwin, a nobleman of East Anglia.* In the construction of such a work, both were worthy of admiration for their laudable liberality; and if a distinction were to be made between the two, the greater amount of praise should be bestowed on the layman, who, on noticing the prelate with downcast eyes weeping at the funeral of a deceased nobleman, was so captivated with the bishop's piety, that he placed at Oswald's command all the property he possessed.†

The blessed Oswald established in his own diocese seven monasteries, subjected to a regular monastic discipline, and expelled all clerical persons who preferred the society of females to the performance of their ecclesiastical duties.‡ Of these seven monasteries, one was

---

mesiam dirigit, et eruditum inde reducens adunatis monachis Wigornæ morum præceptorem constituit." EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 203. See *Hist. Rames*, c. 20, p. 400.

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. iv. p. 291.

† W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. iv. p. 291. In the *Hist. Rames.* c. 17, 20, a full and most interesting account is given of the first meeting between St. Oswald and Aylwin—of their conversation—of the determination of the latter to build Ramsey monastery, and of the manner of which that project was carried into execution, pp. 395, 400. At Ramsey monastery, it is stated by the monk Malmsbury, that he was eye-witness to a miracle. His words are, "*Vidi ego quod dicam.*" See *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. iv. p. 292. Vit. S. Oswald. c. 2. § 6, c. 3, § 13. *Act. Sanct.*, (Feb.) vol. iii. pp. 753, 754. *Decem Scriptores*, pp. 162, 184, 359, 475, 879. For an account of Ramsey monastery, see DUGDALE'S *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 546—592. It has been supposed, that the most ancient sepulchral monument in England, was that of Aylwin, see same vol. p. 546, note c. (Ellis's edition).

‡ EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 200.

Winchelcomb, over which Germanus* was appointed to act as abbot; and at the same time, abbots well experienced in religious matters were nominated to the other monasteries. Amongst the abbots was a man named Folbert, who presided over the abbey of Pershore. Folbert was worthy of all respect for his morality, and as a most fervent maintainer of monastic rules, but he was also liable to reprehension for his extreme, and indiscreet severity in enforcing them. He reached the full span of life, and was placed on a bier, as if he had departed amongst the dead, when suddenly the soul was restored back to the body, and he raised himself up, to the horror of all who beheld him! Every one fled from his presence with the exception of Germanus, who approached to his side, and enquired what he had seen, what had happened to him, and wherefore it was that he had returned again to this world? He answered that he had been conducted by St. Benedict to the presence of God, that God had pardoned him his sins, through the merits of the beloved Oswald, and that he had been restored to life for the purpose of testifying to the sanctity of that paternal bishop. A question was then put to him as to what was the appearance, what the habit, and who the companions of Father Benedict? and to this, the reply was that "the "robe of Benedict was one all over refulgent with the "glitter of diamonds, that his appearance was beautiful "beyond the conception of man, and that he was followed "by numberless thousands of white-robed monks, and of "angelic nuns." With these words, silence fell upon him,

* For an account of Germanus, see WHARTON, *Ang. Sac.*, note, p. 200.

and having received the viaticum of our Lord's Body, he survived half a day longer; and then, for the second time departed this life.*

The abbot appointed to St. Albans by Oswald was Ælfric, who was afterwards archbishop of Canterbury.†

Abbo, a monk of Fleury was placed by Oswald in the monastery of Ramsey, in order that he might teach the monks, and direct the schools, for Abbo was distinguished not only by his devotion, but had rendered himself illustrious by his literary and scientific knowledge, and was, thus a fitting teacher of others, both as regards monastic discipline and scholastic acquirements.‡ It was this Abbo, who under the encouragement, and with the advice of St. Dunstan, wrote in a commendable manner, an account of the sufferings of St. Edmund, king and martyr.§ Abbo

* Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 200, 201. Vit. S. Oswald, c. 2, § 8. *Act. Sanct.*, (Feb.) vol: iii. p. 753. A vision somewhat similar to that of Folbert will be found in Vit. S. Walthen. Abb. c. 5, § 67. *Act. Sanct.* (*August.*) vol. i. p. 264.

† *Vit. S. Oswald*, c. 2, § 9. See the learned and convincing disquisition of Dr. Lingard, to shew that this Ælfric is not to be confounded with the celebrated Ælfric the translator. *Anglo Saxon Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 319, and note R., pp. 452—456. In the same note, is demonstrated what was the faith at all times of the church of England, with respect to transubstantiation.

‡ "Qui monachos doceret, scholas regeret, et in disciplina regulari et scientia literali proderet. *Vit. S. Oswald*, c. 2, § 10. Thus Oswald the church reformer, was like Adalberon the church reformer, a promoter of education. Religion was fostered and learning advanced by him at the same time: "Hinc ergo processit; ut *cum religionis augmento liberales artes*, quæ prius ob diversos casus in neglectum per Angliam venerant, quaquaversum *patris Oswaldi industria ac solicitudine eventilatæ multipliciter pullularent.*" Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 201.

§ This work will be found in the MSS. Cott. Library. Tib. B. 2. See Turner's *Hist. of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. i. pp. 526, 527, notes 34, 35.

afterwards returned to Fleury, when he was made abbot, and slain by monks.*

The relics of the holy and venerable bishop St. Swithin had lain in the earth for one hundred and ten years, when they were raised from the monument in which they had reposed, by the holy prelate St. Ethelwold, and placed by him and Æthelstan, abbot of Glastonbury, and Ethelgar, abbot of the new monastery, on the 15th of June, in the year 970, with all due and fitting honour in the church of S. S. Peter and Paul at Winchester.† Upon the day on which the relics of St. Swithin were taken from the grave and enshrined, a vast number of persons were collected together, and all engaged in making their votive offerings, and addressing to him their prayers.‡ None could complain that his prayer had been made in vain, that his wishes had been disregarded, or his hopes disappointed; for all that

---

* *Vit. S. Oswald*, c. 2, § 10. *Act. Sanct.*, (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 753. EADMER, *Ang. Sac.*, p. 201. "Martyrii palma a Deo pro justitia coronatus," is the expression used respecting him by Eadmer. See BARONIUS *Ann. Eccles.*, vol. xvi. pp. 433, 436. *Hist. Rames.*, c. 21, p. 400. "Non a monachis suis occisus, sed a monasterii servis." PAGI critic, BARONIUS, vol. xvi. p. 206, ad an. 971, § 4. "Abbatem nostrum Abbonem excessisse a seculo coronatum martyrio, qui Wasconum gladiis felix promeruit feliciter beatorum martyrum socius fieri." Epistola Encylica Monachorum Floriacensium. BALUZ. *Miscell.*, vol. i. p. 411. See also GLAB. RODULPH, *Hist.*, lib. iii. c. 3. *Chron. Ademar. Cabenens*, a. 1004. *Chron. Andegavens*, a. 1004. *Chron. Floriacens*, a. 1003. *Fragment. Hist. Francic*, a. 1004. *Vit. S. Abbo. Floriacens.* in *Rer. Gall. et Franc. Script.*, vol. x pp. 29, 148, 176, 178, 213, 338, 339, 340.

† F. WIGORN, p. 606.

‡ W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 244.

was asked for was obtained, and all that was desired conceded. So many miracles of so many different kinds were performed, that the memory of mankind can afford no instance of such multitudinous prodigies occurring at the same period of time. And hence there came to be bestowed upon St. Swithin the particular designation of "the pious," because, in all cases, with the exception of those in which a lively faith was wanting, the assistance that was prayed for from St. Swithin was promptly bestowed.*

Ethelwold had found his preaching greatly aided by the heavenly miracles of St. Swithin, whose translation was then so gloriously and with such fitting grandeur effected by him. Thus did shine these two lights placed as it were on golden candlesticks in the house of the Lord; for the saving exhortations which were preached by the lips of Ethelwold, were illustrated by the wondrous miracles of St. Swithin, and both combined together to the praise and honour of the Holy Name of Christ.†

---

* "Omni se invocanti, nisi fides defuerit, ad auxiliandum celer." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 244. "In qua translatione per merita sancti Swithuni innumeri infirmi sanitatem sunt adepti." INGULPH. *Hist.*, p. 45. The monk of Malmsbury declares that these miracles continued to his day to be effected at the shrine of St. Swithin, and that he was an eye witness to one of them. "Cujus bonitas jamjudum inchoata, nec nostra, ætate exsolescit. *Vidi ego*, quod mirum, hominem," &c. *Gest. Pont. Ang.*. lib. ii. p. 244. See *Act. Sanct.* (Julii,) vol. i. p. 328. S. DUNELM. *Hist, Reg.*, p. 159. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 413. *Chron. Petriburgens.*, p. 31. (Giles's Ed.) *Chron. Mailros.* p. 150. *Offic. Sanct. Ang.*, pp. 214, 215. (Richardson, Derby.) BRAND'S *Popular Antiquities*, vol. i. pp. 340, 341, 342. (Bohn's Antiq. Lib.) and pp. 78—85, in this volume.

† WOLSTAN. Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 3, § 26. *Act. Sanct.* (August,) vol. i. p. 93.

It was in the year 970, that Ethelwold commenced the restoration of Medhamstead, when it had lain waste for nearly a hundred years, and that it obtained the name of Peterburgh.*

In the year 971, died the Etheling Edmund, son of king Edgar, and was interred with due honours in the monastery of Rumsey.† In the course of the same year also died the Ealdorman Alfegus of Southampton, and was buried at Glastonbury; and shortly afterwards Ordgar, the lord of Domnania, and father-in-law of king Edgar, departed this life, and was interred at Exeter.‡

——

The monastery of Glastonbury had ever been loved by king Edgar, beyond all others, and he had increased its revenues by the donation of large estates; whilst in all things that pertained to the adornment and improvement of the church, whether interior or exterior, he was always to be found a sedulous observer and a diligent superintendent. As to the privileges which he bestowed (in the year 971,§) upon this church, we consider it not improper to

---

* *Chron. Petriburgens.* p. 31. A copy of the charter to Peterborough will be found in INGULPH. *Hist.*, pp. 46, 47. See also Vit. S. Ethelwold, c. 3, § 24. *Act. Sanct.* (August,) vol. i. p. 93. Of the enormous gifts bestowed by Ethelwold on this monastery, it is said, "adeo elaboratis sumptibus et ampliatis possessionibus, ut pene tota circa regio illi subjaceat." W. MALMSB., lib. iv. p. 291. See *Sax. Chron.*, ad an. 963.

† F. WIGORN, p. 606. *Sax. Chron.*

‡ F. WIGORN, p. 606. ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 413.

§ The charter here referred to is also to be found in MALMSB *De Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, pp. 320, 321. The date there assigned

give insertion to them in this history, as we find them set forth in an ancient manuscript.*

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, although "the decrees of pontiffs, and the words of priests are like "unto the foundations of mountains, that are fixed down "by indissoluble ligatures, still it frequently occurs amid "storms and tempests of worldly affairs, the religion of "the holy church of God is dissipated and broken by the "polluted touch of reprobate men. Therefore, it is that "we have determined, and, as a matter that is certain to "be useful to succeeding generations, that those points "which have been defined by salutary counsel, and by "common consent, should be affirmed and corroborated by "these our letters. Wherefore it seems fitting that the "church of the most blessed mother of God, and ever "Virgin Mary of Glastonbury, as it has from ancient "times obtained the principal dignity in this our kingdom, "so should it be honoured by us with some singular and "especial privilege. Thereto being exhorted by Dunstan "and Oswald, archbishops of Canterbury and York, and "the same being assented to by Brithelm, bishop of "Wells, and others our prelates, abbots, and nobles, we, "Edgar, by Divine permission, king of the English, and "of all the other nations around, the governor and ruler; "in the name of the Holy Trinity, and for the soul's sake

---

to it is 971, and no doubt is the correct one, although differing from that given in the *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 150. See BARONIUS, vol. xvi. pp. 205, 206. HARDY, notes on W. Malmsb. vol. i. p. 150, note 5, and p. 245, note 1. (E. H. S.)

* W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 149. The reader will observe that in the text extracts only from the charter are given.

"of our father, whose body rests in that monastery, as "well as for the sake of all our ancestors,* do, by this "present privilege, decree, ordain, and determine that the "aforesaid monastery and all its property shall remain "now, and for 'ever more free and clear of all fiscal "charges. * * * * * The same liberty "and power which we have in our own court, both of dis- "missing the accused, and of punishing the guilty, the "abbot and the monks in their court are to have in every "species of suit whatsoever; and if the abbot, or even a "monk of the monastery meet in his travels, in any part "of our kingdom, with a robber who is about to be "deprived of life by hanging, or by any other species of "capital punishment, we give unto him the power of "rescuing that person from the imminent danger in which "he is found.† * * * * *

---

* "Pro anima patris mei qui ibi requiescit, et antecessorum patrum meorum." W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 150. *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.* p. 320.

† "Si autem abbas vel monachus quislibet loci illius latronem, qui ad suspendium vel ad quodlibet mortis periculum ducitur, obvium habuerit in itinere, habeant potestatem eripiendi eum *ab imminenti periculo* in toto regno meo." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 150. *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, p. 320. This power of interfering to save human life, considering the severity of Edgar's punishments for theft, (see Hardy, notes on Malmsbury, vol. i. p. 251, 2,) must have been regarded by a monk of Glastonbury as one of his most precious privileges. The words marked in italics indicate that it was the king's expectation that the power thus conferred would not be injudiciously exercised—that monks would not, for instance, interfere to save those, who like the coiners, condemned to death by St. Dunstan, were the robbers of the poor, and the despoilers of the needy—wretches, who brought the humble, the innocent, and the honest to shame, disgrace, and poverty—"ipsi pauperes in commune lædunt, et quantum ad eos

"By the interdict of God, and by our authority, saving, "however, the dignity of the holy Roman church, and of "Canterbury, we prohibit every person exercising every "species of office, be he king, or bishop, or ealdorman, or "etheling, or any of our own ministers, upon entering "within the precincts of Glastonbury or its parishes, for "the purpose of pursuing, seizing, or prosecuting any one, "or of doing anything which may be adverse to the inter- "ests of those who have there devoted themselves to the "service of God; for to the abbot, and the brotherhood "alone is, as we have before stated, power given to determine "and decide upon all causes known, as well as unknown, "great as well as small, and of every kind and degree. If "the advantages bestowed by these our privileges shall "upon any occasion by any person, no matter what their "dignity, rank, or profession, be perverted, or rendered of "no avail, let such know that their attempt will bear with "it the character of an audacious sacrilege, and for which "they, with fear and trembling, shall have to render an "account to a Strict Judge, unless the fault committed "shall be previously made amendment for by a full, com- "plete, and worthy satisfaction."*

---

pertinet, omnes aut in opprobium, aut in egestatem, aut in nihilum redigunt." Vit. S. Dunst., c. 7. Annot. *e*. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 371.

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 150. *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, pp. 320, 321. In the "Scriptores Post Bedam," there is given a copy of the charter to Glastonbury, in different words, to which is attached a letter of Pope John XIII. to King Edgar. Extracts from the first will be read with interest. The letter of the pope we give in full. Both in the extracts and in the letter we adopt the translation of the Rev. John Sharpe, as revised by the Rev. J. A. Giles:—

"Edgar of glorious memory, King of the Angles, son of King

The charter setting forth these privileges was confirmed by the solemn signature of King Edgar in the twelfth year

---

Edmund, whose inclinations were ever vigilantly bent on divine matters, often coming to the monastery of the holy mother of God at Glastonbury, and studying to honour this place with dignity superior to others, hath, by the common consent of the bishops abbots, and nobility, conferred on it many, and very splendid privileges; the first of which is, that no person, unless a monk of that place, shall there be abbot, either in name, or in office, nor any other, except such as the common consent of the meeting shall have chosen, according to the tenor of the rule. * * * He hath ordained also, that so often as the abbots or the monks of this place, shall appear to any of their society to be dignified with holy orders, they shall cause any bishop canonically ordained, either in his own cathedral, or in the monastery of St. Mary at Glastonbury, to ordain such monks and clerks as they deem fit to the church of St. Mary.

"When, therefore, by the common consent, as has been said, of his prelates, abbots, and nobility, he determined to grant these privileges to the place aforesaid, he laid his own horn, beautifully formed of ivory and adorned with gold, upon the altar of the holy mother of God, and by that donation confirmed them to the same holy mother of God, and her monks to be possessed for ever. Soon after he caused this horn to be cut in two in his presence, that no future abbot might give or sell it to any one, commanding part of it to be kept upon the spot for a testimony of the aforesaid donation.

"Recollecting, however, how great is the temerity of human inconstancy, and on whom it is likely to creep, and fearing lest any one hereafter should attempt to take away these privileges from this place, or eject the monks, he sent this charter of royal liberality to the renowned lord, Pope John, who had succeeded Octavian in the honour of the pontificate, begging him to corroborate these grants by an apostolical bull. Kindly receiving the legation, the pope, with the assenting voice of the Roman council, confirmed what had been already ordained, by writing an apostolical injunction, terribly hurling on the violators of them, should any be so daring, the vengeance of a perpetual curse. This confirmation therefore of the aforesaid pope, directed to the same place, King Edgar, of worthy memory, laid upon the altar of the holy mother of God, for a perpetual remembrance, commanding it to be carefully kept in future for the information of posterity.

of his reign, at London, and in the presence of the general council of his nobles. In the same year, Pope John at a general synod, gave his authoritative sanction to this charter, and also caused it to be confirmed by all persons of exalted rank who were present, at the council of his holiness. The pontiff, moved by a tender and paternal pity, addressed at this time a letter to the ealdorman Aluric,

---

We have judged it proper to insert both these instruments, lest we should be supposed to insert such things against those persons who seek to enter into the fold of St. Mary, not like shepherds, by the door, but like thieves and robbers, some other way. "Be it known to all the faithful, that I, John the Twelfth, "through the mercy of God, unworthy pope of the holy Roman "see, am entreated by the humble request of the noble Edgar, king "of the Angles, and of Dunstan archbishop of the holy church of "Canterbury, for the monastery of St. Mary, Glastonbury, which, "induced by the love of the heavenly king, they have endowed "with many great possessions, increasing in it the monastic order, "and having confirmed it by royal grant, they pray me also so to "do. Wherefore assenting to their affectionate request, I take "that place into the bosom of the Roman church, and the protec- "tion of the holy apostles, and support and confirm its immuni- "ties as long as it shall remain in the same conventual order in "which it now flourishes. The monks shall have power to elect "their own superiors; ordination, as well of monks as of clerks, "shall be at the will of the abbot and convent. We ordain, more- "over, that no person shall have liberty to enter this island, either "to hold courts, to make enquiry, or to correct; and should any "one attempt to oppose this, or to take away, retain, diminish, or "harass with vexatious boldness, the possessions of the same "church, he shall become liable to a perpetual curse, by the au- "thority of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the holy mo- "ther of God, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all saints, un- "less he recant. But the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be "with you all, who maintain the rights of the place aforesaid. "Amen. And let this our deed remain unshaken. Done in the "time of Edward, abbot of said monastery." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. c. 8, pp. 56, 57, in *Script. p. Bedam.* See *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, pp. 319, 321.

who was then a sore persecutor of the church of Glastonbury. The letter was in the following terms.

"John Bishop, servant of the servants of God, sends "to our well-beloved son in the spirit, the renowned Lord "Aluric, wishes for his everlasting salvation and the apos- "tolical benediction.

"We have learned by the relation of some of the faith- "ful, that you have been doing much injury to the church "of Mary, the holy mother of God, which is known as "Glastonbury monastery, the monastery itself being the "first of all in the entire of Britain, and by the ancient "founders declared to be under the peculiar and distinct "protection of the Roman pontiff. Now, from this mo- "nastery, farms, and vills, and even churches, viz., those "of Brente, and Piltun, the gifts of king Ina, as well as "other churches, which it justly and canonically possesses, "viz., Sowey, Stet, Merline, Budecal, Sapewice, have by "your greedy cupidity been torn from its lawful jurisdic- "tion! and it is moreover said, that because of the close- "ness of your habitation to the monastery, you have ever "been found hurtful to its prosperity, and adverse to its "interests.* Much more fitting would it be, that by your "desire, and your aid, the holy church of God, in the "neighbourhood of which you reside, should be enlarged, "and out of your abundance enriched. It is an abomination, "if its means are diminished by your opposition, and it- "self humiliated by your oppressive tyranny.

---

* "Et propter quod eidem loco propinquam haberes habitationem illi semper nocuum esse." W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 151. *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, p. 321.

"And, since we, though unworthy, feel no doubt that "the care is imposed upon us by the blessed Apostle "Peter, of being solicitous for all churches and of all "Christians, therefore do we admonish you, as dear to us, "that for the love of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and "through your respect for us, that you abstain from all "spoliation of that place, and that you trespass upon "none of its possessions—its churches, chapels, vills, or "property of any kind. But if you persist in so doing, "then know, that you are, by our authority—we therein "acting on behalf of the prince of the Apostles—excommu-"nicated—removed from the assembly of the faithful—sub-"jected to a perpetual anathema—and condemned now and "henceforth with the traitor Judas to fire everlasting."*

The province of Lothian had at all periods of time been exposed to the incursions of the Scots and the Picts, and it was therefore a district of the empire, on which but slight care and attention had been bestowed by preceding sovereigns.† At this time, (A.D. 971,‡) Kenneth, king of the Scots, hearing of the high fame of king Edgar, and the commendations that were bestowed upon

---

* W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 150, 151. *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, p. 321. See ALFORD, *Ann.*, vol. iii. p. 363, § 2, &c.

† WALLINGFORD, *Chron.*, pp. 544, 545.

‡ We place the events recorded in the text in this year, as they appear by the charter to Glastonbury, and the signatures attached to it, to have occurred about this time. See *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.* p. 321.

him, for his greatness and generosity, by his ealdormen Oslac and Eadulf, and by Elfsius, the bishop of Durham, felt a most anxious desire to see the English king, and sought therefore that he might be conducted by them to London, in order that an opportunity might be afforded to him of conversing with Edgar. In accordance with the king's commands, these noblemen and the bishop were his conductors. Upon the king's arrival in London he was presented to Edgar, who received him with every honour due to his high rank, and who also held with him many conversations, which were characterised with the familiarity and jocund ease that should pervade the intercourse of friends. In the course of these conversations, king Kenneth suggested to king Edgar that the province of Lothian should be placed under his jurisdiction, and assigned over as an hereditary property to the kings of the Scotch. Edgar, who would do nothing without due consideration, lest he should afterwards find reason to repent of it, submitted the request of king Kenneth to his council. The nobles, who were well learned in all that had been done by their progenitors, taking into consideration that this assignment could only be made upon homage being done to the king of the English by the king of the Scotch, and that for the defence of the Lothian district there were difficulties in the way of an English monarch, and moreover, that the sovereignty of the district itself was of little value, gave their assent to Edgar's divesting himself of Lothian, provided that Kenneth sought and received it by doing homage, and that in so doing he should bind himself that the people should have preserved to them their ancient customs, and that they should remain with the

name and language of Englishmen.* There was too, this condition attached, that on each and every year, when at their state festivals, the king and his successors wore the royal diadem, the Scotch kings should come to the court, and with all the other princes of the kingdom, participate in the joyous banquets prepared for such occasions. Edgar also bestowed upon Kenneth several mansions that lay on the road to Scotland, in order that he and his successors in going to, and returning from the banquet, might have residences of their own at their disposal. The mansions thus bestowed remained, until the reign of Henry II., the recognized property of the kings of Scotland.†

In this manner was terminated the old and oft-renewed quarrel respecting the Lothian territory. For this reason did Kenneth acknowledge himself as subject to king Edgar, as did also Malcolm, king of the Cumbrians, and Oriccus (Mackus,) king of several islands, and various vikings of the Orkneys—all of which lands they held by doing homage to Edgar.‡

It is stated of king Edgar that he was low in stature, and deficient in the appearance of bodily strength, and yet so much of dignity was there in his manners, and so much of energy and vivacity in his seemingly weakly

* WALLINGFORD, *Chron.*, pp. 544, 545.

† ROG. DE WENDOV, vol. i. pp. 416, 417. The same author adds that Edgar bestowed upon Kenneth "a hundred ounces of pure gold, many magnificent robes, and rings with precious stones."

‡ WALLINGFORD, *Chron.*, p. 545. The names of some of those so mentioned by Wallingford appear thus attached to the charter of Glastonbury in the year 971. "Ego Kinadius Rex Albaniæ acquievi. Ego Macussius archipirat confortavi." *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.*, p. 321. See CHALMERS' *Caledonia*, vol. i. pp. 356, 393, 394. LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii, p. 141.

frame, that he was ever ready to provoke to an encounter the boldest and the bravest he could meet; and the only fear he seemed to entertain was, that those whom he provoked should be afraid to contend against him.* An instance of this latter quality was afforded in his dealings with Kenneth, king of the Scotch, who, upon one occasion, when some garrulous persons were in his presence, laughingly said that "it was a marvel to him how so many "provinces could bow down in subjection to such a mean "looking little man." The words were received as an insult, and as such retailed to king Edgar by some low buffoon, who repeated them openly as a reproach to Edgar, in presence of a large and solemn assembly of persons collected together at a state banquet. The king, Edgar, concealed from his friends the course which he intended to pursue upon hearing these words repeated. He invited Kenneth, as if he wished to consult with him upon some secret of great importance, to go out to walk with him, and then, when he had led him to a considerable distance into a wood, he placed in Kenneth's hand one of two swords which he had brought with him. "Now," said he, "that we are quite alone, we can try our strength "against each other. Now, I mean to act in such a "manner as shall make it apparent which of us two should "be subjected to the other. You too, I am sure will not "now recoil from that comparison between us which you "have yourself provoked. You will, I am certain, now "try that issue with me; for base indeed, would it be in a "king to be loud-voiced in the banquetting-hall, and yet "not prompt for action in the battle-field."

* W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 156.

Kenneth, confused by these words of Edgar, did not at first venture to speak a word; but then falling at the feet of his lord, the king, he prayed pardon for words that had been merely spoken in a sportive mood; and, the pardon thus sought for, was on the instant conceded.*

About the year 971, or, perchance in the year 972, died† the queen Elgiva, the wife of king Edmund.‡ She was afterwards canonized; and at her shrine, through the aid of God, innumerable miracles are to this day operated —in that place, which is so generally known as the monastery of Shaftesbury.§

Shaftesbury now a village, and formerly a city, is situated on the declivity of a hill.‖ The proof of its antiquity may be found in a stone, in the chapter-house of the monastery, and that had been transferred thither from the ruins of an old wall. On that stone these words were inscribed, "In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 880, king

---

* W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 156.

† We follow the suggestion of Henschenius in fixing the date of St. Elgiva's death about the year 971, or 972. The learned Bollandist having observed that her name is to be found to a charter of Glastonbury in the year 971, adds "eodem forte aut sequenti anno vita functa." *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai) vol. iv. p. 187, § 6. Pagi fixes the date in the year 972. See Baronius, cum critic. Pagi, vol. xvi. p. 217, § 8.

‡ Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. vi. p. 848. According to this author St. Elgiva died in the year 948—a manifest mistake.

§ "——in cujus mausoleo (cooperante Deo) usque ad præsnes innumerosa equidem miracula fiunt in cœnobio, quod vulgo Scæflesbyrig nuncupatur." Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. vi. p. 848. See Leland, *Collectanea*, vol. ii. p. 252.

‖ W. Malmlb., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 251.

"Alfred, in the eighth year of his reign founded this city."* There it was that Elgiva, the wife of Edmund, the immediate descendant of Alfred, founded a monastery of nuns, and there, when she died, her remains were deposited.†

And here we deem it to be by no means unfitting nor unsuitable to transfer to our pages, an account of that wondrous spectacle, which heaven at one time was pleased

---

* "The abbay stode by [East] of the toun. There was an inscription on the right hond enteringe of the chapter howse set up by Alfredus, kynge of the West Saxons, in knowledge that he repayred Shaftesberye destroyed by the Danes. The inscription of the remaines of the which William of Malmesbyri spekethe stodd in the waulle of S. Maries chapell at the townes end. *The chapell is now pulled down.* (Leland, vii. 80). Holland adds of the old stone of Shaftesbury, "I have been informed, that *it continued there till the time of king Henry VIII.*" The British name of Shaftesbury has the same origin as the Saxon: *Paladur* as well as *Sceaft* expressing the point of the hill on which it stood.* * The abbey was valued at £1166 per annum. But *the abbey church was destroyed at the dissolution.* Mr. Hutchins reckons up *twelve* churches of which *only three* remain." CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, vol. i. p. 72. At the time of the dissolution the abbess and convent of Shaftesbury offered five hundred marks to Henry VIII., and £100 to Cromwell, to be allowed to remain as nuns under any other name and apparel. See ELLIS'S *Original Letters illustrative of English History* (Third Series) letter cccxliii. vol. iv. pp. 230, 231. "At Shaftesbury, a Benedictine nunnery, founded in the year 888, by King Alfred, value £1329. 1s. 3d. yearly, now worth £26,581. 5s. Granted, 1 Edward VI., to William earl of Southampton." COBBETT. See DUGDALE, *Monasticon*, vol. ii. pp. 471—486, and pp. 210, 243, of this volume.

† W. MALMSB, *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 251. As a proof that miracles were worked at the tomb of St. Elgiva in the days of Malmsbury, as of Ethelwerd, we may quote the following lines from the same page:—

"Inops visus et auditus, si adorant tumulum,
"Sanitate restituti probant SANCTÆ meritum.
"Rectum gressum refert domum, qui accessit loripes;
"Mente captus redit sanus, boni sensus locuples."

to present to the eyes of Edgar (the son of Elgiva).* He was one day in a forest abundant with game, and it happened to him, as it so frequently occurs to others, that he should find himself left quite alone, whilst his companions had dispersed,† through the pathless windings of the thickets in pursuit of wild animals. He proceeded directly onward, until he at length reached the outlet of the forest, where he stopped awaiting the arrival of his friends. It was not long before he felt his eyes oppressed with sleep, and he alighted from his horse, in order that the fatigues of the day he had passed, might be moderated by the enjoyment of balmy repose.‡ He stretched himself on the ground beneath a wild apple tree, the wide-spreading, low-hanging leafy branches of which, formed over him a shady bower. Lassitude soothed, and a flowing stream with its murmuring ripples invited him to sleep—when a female hunting dog, and seemingly large with whelp, came to rest itself at his feet, and aroused the sleeper. The hound was mute, but the whelps within her appeared to give tongue with various yelps, and merry noisy barks, as if they rejoiced in being enclosed in the cell within which they were confined. Astonished at this prodigy, he raised his eyes to the topmost branches of the tree, when he saw two apples falling one after another into the stream that

---

* "Interea non indecens opinor si quiddam, quod ei divinitus ostensum est, stylo commendem." W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 154. "De prophetali gratia, quam ei Deus affudit alias dictum est." *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. p. 251.

† "Sociis * * despersis." These words tend to shew that the incident here mentioned, occurred previous to Edgar's accession to the throne.

‡ "Medicæ quietis."

ran beside him; and, as each fell, he heard it strike against that which preceded it, so that from the splashing bubbles of the disturbed waters, sounds were emitted which conveyed distinctly to his ears these words "*wel his the*" that which signifies—"well is thee"—"well is thee." Shortly after this, he saw, as if the flow of waters carried them onward, first a small empty pitcher floating upon the surface of the stream, and this was followed by a large pitcher full of water; and then, as if they were stirred by the quick boiling foam of a whirlpool against each other, the larger vessel seemed to press upon the small in order that it might disgorge its liquid contents into it, but the small pitcher escaped empty from every such attempt, and, as if it triumphed in its escape, would dash saucily against the side of the larger!

Edgar returned home, and as the Psalmist says, 'He thought upon what had been done and sought out his spirit.' His mother, however, convinced him that his countenance ought to be calm, and his mind serene; that she would seek the Lord, in the hope of learning what was destined to come to pass, for He who alone knew all mysteries, might through His inspiration, make these plain and manifest unto her.

The advice of his mother suppressed the sadness of Edgar, and induced him to cast away from his spirit the cares under which it laboured; for he was perfectly conscious of his mother's sanctity, and he was well aware that God had been pleased to reveal many things to her.

This mother was Elgiva—she who was always intent upon the performance of good works and endowed with such tenderness, compassion, and charity, that even those who were really guilty of offences, and whom the severe

sentence of the judges had openly condemned, she secretly redeemed from the dire punishments awarded to them. The costly garments, which to most women serve as an incitement to the display of an unbecoming want of modesty, were with her but the means of demonstrating her generosity; for her richest embroidered robe was often bestowed upon a person seeking alms from her.

So perfect was the beauty of her person, and so admirable the work of her hands, that even envy, when it could discover no fault to reprehend, was compelled to praise them.

The power of vaticination had penetrated to the very innermost recesses of her spirit: it had saturated the marrow of her mental energies, so that on the following morning she was able to address her son in these words:—

"The barking of the whelps, whilst the mother was "quiescent, signifies, that those who are now in power "and doing well, (though evil disposed), will remain silent, "but that after thy death, worthless, wicked, debauched "spendthrifts as yet unborn will be found to arise and "bark against God's church.*

"As to the one apple falling in quick succession after "the other, so that from their collision as they fell, a "sound was emitted which seemed to convey the words "'well is thee,' this signifies that from thee who are now "as a tree shading all England, shall issue two sons; and "those who favour the pretensions of the second shall "destroy the first, and then the promoters of their oppos-

* "Nondum nati nebulones contra Dei latrabunt ecclesiam." To how many of Anti-Catholic English sovereigns and courtiers is not this description applicable?

"ing parties shall say of each of the young princes, 'Well "'is thee,' because he who is dead shall be reigning in "heaven, and he who is living shall be reigning in this "world.

"Then as to the larger pitcher not being able to fill up "the smaller with its contents, that is intended to desig- "nate the nations of the Northmen, which are more nume- "rous than the English, and who will, after thy death, "attack England; and although they will make many at- "tempts to supply the losses suffered in their ranks, by "fresh accessions of their compatriots, shall never be able "to fill up with their soldiers this corner of the world. "On the contrary our Angles,* even when they seem to be "most completely subdued, will have vigour and strength "enough to expel them—and the land shall be theirs, as "it is in accordance with the will of God, and so shall re- "main unto the time pre-appointed by Christ."

The truth of this prediction will hereafter be made most clear to the reader. That which is worthy of consideration is the undoubted sanctity of both parent and child, when the one, with vigilant and unimpeded regard, was able to look upon mysteries, and the other with the far-seeing eye of prophetic vision, was permitted to penetrate the secrets of the problems propounded to her.†

---

* The original cannot be closely translated in this passage: "nunquam hunc *angulum* mundi poterunt implere, quin potius *Angli nostri*—"

† W. Malmsb., *Gest. Pont. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 154, 155. See *Act. Sanct.*, (Mai) vol. iv. pp. 186, 187. *S. Ælgyfa. Comment. Histor.*, § i, 6. Matthew, *Conq. Ang. Ord.*, pp. 877—882.

Upon the death of Osketyll, archbishop of York, in the year 972, his relation, St. Oswald, bishop of Worcester, was elected to fill his place.* Oswald was compelled to accept of the office by king Edgar and St. Dunstan, and forced to the discharge of archiepiscopal duties by the assenting applause of all the clergy.† Oswald, upon being appointed archbishop of York, proceeded to Rome, in order that he might obtain from the Apostolical see the pallium which belonged to his office; and, at the same time the king delegated to him the transaction of many affairs of high importance with the pope.‡ Once he left his own country; he was exposed to many perils at sea, and many dangers by land, all of which however were safely passed through, and he at length reached Rome. He was there presented to the apostolic John, by whom was granted all that he wished for. The pall was bestowed upon him, the affairs entrusted to him by the king as an ambassador, received a favourable answer;§ and dismissed with honour by the pope, he returned to England to be received with honour by his sovereign, and with every mark

---

* S. Dunelm., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, p. 159. F. Wigorn, p. 606. The *Saxon Chronicle* places the death of Osketyll in the year 970. See note by Wharton, *Ang .Sact.*, vol. ii. p. 203.

† Vit. S. Oswald., c. 3, § 12. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 754. Eadmer affirms that Oswald could not be induced for some time to assent to his elevation—"sed petentibus suscipere regimen viduatæ ecclesiæ non statim annuit. Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 203.

‡ Eadmer., Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 203, 204.

§ "Plurima negotia Regni prout ei Rex sibi delegaverat." "Functis quoque responsis regiæ legationis quam ferebat." Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 204. There is some interest in the fact that the greatest of English kings maintained thus, through his bishops, diplomatic intercourse with Rome.

of respect by the nation Upon announcing to the king the results of his embassy, and thus proving what prudence had guided his conduct in every transaction confided to him, his merits were proclaimed aloud by all men, and then feeling that he was sustained by the grace and favour of the king, he proceeded to his see at York. He was there inaugurated with the highest honours, and took his seat in the archiepiscopal throne amid the jubilation of the people, and the joyous chants of the clergy.* Lest, however, the monks in the monasteries he had formed, should be exposed to temptations greater than they had strength to bear, by being deprived of the superintendence of their shepherd, he was, by the authority of St. Dunstan, continued in his care of the diocese of Worcester, along with the see of York.†

A short time after this arrangement had been made came on the rogation days;‡ and Oswald, the servant of God, travelled to Ramsey, in order that he might visit and console the monks, who, as we have already stated, were placed there by him. He arrived and was received in the monastery. The monks then went, as was the custom upon the rogation days, to the church of the Holy Mary, but which church, on account of the interjacent lake, could not be reached by land without making a long circuit. Upon a certain day, mass having been celebrated, and the solemn office of preaching having been discharged by the bishop, the monks, wishing to save themselves, in

---

* Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 203, 204.

† Vit. S. Oswald., c. 3, § 12. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 754.

‡ "Post hæc instabant dies Rogationum." Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 204.

returning, from making the same long journey they had taken in the morning, got on board a boat in order that they might thus pass over the stream which separated the church from the monastery. A greater number however, hurried into the boat, than it was capable of carrying, and the overloaded vessel was in the waters when it began gradually to sink beneath its burden. Those who were in the boat were struck with terror, for they perceived that death was imminent. They raised their voices in prayer and begged the assistance of the blessed Benedict, and of father Oswald. The bishop himself was at the moment standing on the bank, and giving some useful and necessary directions to the persons who were with him. As soon however as the clamour of many voices reached his ears, he stood amazed, looked towards the monks, and then seeing that these, his children, were in the very peril of death, he turned his heart to God, and pointed his right hand to them. With that hand he made the sign of the blessed cross,* and instantly the boat rose over the surface of the water in which it was about to be submerged, sprung lightly up, as if it felt no weight, and was quickly and safely with all its passengers, wafted to the opposite side! Awful fear was followed by the consciousness of perfect security; and for all that had happened thanks to God were in every heart, and His praises on every tongue.†

Oswald remained at Ramsey for some time, and, as was

---

* "Quo signo beatæ crucis edito."

† Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. pp. 204, 205. See Vit. S. Oswald, c. 3, § 13. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 754. In illustration of this miracle by the sign of the cross, see *Act. Sanct.* (March,) vol. i. pp. 562, 563, (April,) vol. iii. pp. 471, 691.

his custom, living with the monks, and devoting his nights not less than his days to the edification of their lives.* And whilst he was thus employed, a messenger came to him from the monks of Ely, to notify to him that one of their number had fallen from the church whilst engaged in building it, and had been killed on the spot. This was a piece of news which filled Oswald with much grief, for he knew that the person who had been killed had not always led a happy life, and therefore he determined to discharge towards the deceased those duties which his own great charity imposed upon him.† He convoked the monks of Ramsey, narrated to them what had occurred, and admonished them that they should pray, with especial earnestness for the soul of their defunct brother.‡ There were then in the monastery vigils, psalms, and tears;—and thus were all its inmates engaged in beating at the gates of mercy of their Redeemer; when, lo! upon a certain night, as the bishop was engaged in prayer, the deceased man appeared distinctly before him, and upon being asked who he was, answered he was the same for whom Oswald was then addressing his prayers to God. Oswald heaved a heavy sigh, as he enquired—"Brother, "how hast thou been hitherto, and how farest thou now?" "Hitherto," was the response, "badly; but now, well. "By thy prayers, and with thy merits, the Lord yesterday, "through His angel, released me from the torturing pains "wherewith I was afflicted. Hither then have I come to "render thanks unto thee, so that thou, grateful for what

* Eadmer, Vit. S. Oswald. *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 205.

† Ibid.

‡ Vit. S. Oswald., c. 3, § 14. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 754.

"has been done, shouldst for this and other graces, give, "with encreased fervour, thanks where they are justly due "to God alone." And having said these words, the man appeared no more.*

Oswald was to be found at all suitable times engaged in visiting his diocese, and whatever he perceived in those subjected to his spiritual care that was calculated to be offensive in the eyes of the Lord, he was indefatigable by his paternal admonitions and castigations to amend or abolish.† Upon one occasion, whilst thus engaged in his visitations, he arrived at Ripon, where St. Wilfrid had formerly built a noble monastery, so noble that it was worthy to be ho-

* Vit. S. Oswald., c. 3, § 14. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 754. See *Ang. Sac.*, vol. ii. p. 205. Instances similar to this, showing the efficacy of the prayers of the pious, in relieving the dead from the pains of purgatory superabound in the lives of the saints. See *Act. Sanct.* (Mart.) vol. i. pp. 296, 468, 469, 523, 577, 634, 673, 674, (April,) vol. iii. pp. 242, 907, 908. We are told of St. Polycarp, the disciple of St. John the Evangelist, offering up a mass for the repose of St. Bucolus—"obtulerunt panem pro Bucolo et ceteris." *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. i. p. 767, and St. Ephraem in the fourth century said: "mortui enim in precationibus atque oblationibus, commemorationis sanctorum viventium beneficio afficiuntur." *Vit.* c. 4, § 17. Same vol. p. 64, see also pp. 588, 589, same vol. In the life of St. Elizabeth, queen of Portugal, the sufferings of her daughter in purgatory were announced to her by a hermit, who stated in the following terms how they were revealed to him, as well as the means by which they might be terminated:—

"Domina Regina Castellæ, filia tua, Constantia, ex hac vita migravit, et in somniis mihi apparuit aliquoties in eremitorio, in quo vivo, dicens mihi, quod tibi nuntiarem, qualiter pœnas purgatorii ferebat; atque sibi subvenires; et modus subveniendi, esset talis. Nimirum, ut curares pro ea Missam celebrari singulis diebus per anni spatium a presbytero casto, qui offerat sacrificium super altare, prout ordinatum a sancta matre ecclesia." Vit. S. Elizabeth. Reg. Lusit., c. 3, § 18. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii,) vol. ii. p. 176. See also § 21, p. 177.

† Vit. S. Oswald, c. 3, § 15. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 754.

noured with his own remains.* The place, however, had been dilapidated by the barbarous Northmen, and had become a retreat for the wild animals of the forest. Oswald, ever vigilant in prayer, was one night engaged in his devotions at this place, when by a Divine revelation he was apprised that the relics of saints were still deposited there; and that if sought for he would certainly find them. The spot indicated was dug up, and there were relics found with a tablet bearing this inscription :—

"Here repose St. Wilfrid,† bishop of York, and the "reverend abbots Tilbert, Botwin, Albert, Signed, and "Wilden."‡ These relics were first deposited in a place fitted to receive them; and afterwards Oswald consigned to a fittingly formed shrine the body of St. Wilfrid, who, he knew, was a relative of the great Wilfrid, the founder of the monastery. As to the remains of St. Wilfrid the elder, they had been previously removed by St. Odo, the archbishop of Canterbury.§ The bodies of the other holy persons were then enshrined and transferred to Worcester with that great honour which is due to the saints.‖

---

* See vol. i. pp. 400, 543, of this work.

† S. Wilfrid the younger, the disciple and successor of St. John of Beverley. Henschenius, in Vit. S. Oswald. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 755, note *f.* See *Act. Sanct.* (April,) vol. iii. pp. 626, 627.

‡ See Henchenius in Vit. S. Oswald. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 755, note *g.*

§ See Pinius. Comment. Præv. in Vit. S. Odo., § 15. *Act. Sanct.* (Julii,) vol. ii. p. 66. R. Dicet, *Abb. Chron.* p. 455. Gervas. *de Combust. Dorob. Eccles.*, p. 1291. As to the dispute between the sees of York and Canterbury, with respect to the relics of the two Wilfrids, see Bromton. *Chron.*, p. 863.

‖ Vit. S. Oswald., c. 3, § 15. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. pp. 754, 755.

Oswald daily supplied with food an innumerable multitude of poor persons; and, in addition to this, he each day selected twelve poor persons, whose feet were washed and kissed by him, and then wiped, first with his long and venerable hairs, next with a towel; and water being poured by him on their hands, he gave to each money, and then, having seated them at a table, acted as their servant, in supplying them with food and drink. At the festival of Easter, such persons were clad by him in new garments, and for some time received and retained by him as guests in his palace. No weakness—no debility could interfere with his discharge of these works of charity; or rather the contrary might be said to occur, for the more debilitated was he in strength, the more earnest and eager was he in acting as a slave to the poor.*

In the year 972, the king of the English, the pacific Edgar, had dedicated, with every fitting honour and solemnity, the church of the new minster at Winchester, which had been commenced by his father Edmund, but was completely finished by himself.†

The king of the English, the pacific Edgar, in the thir-

---

* Vit. S. Oswald, c. 3, § 18. *Act. Sanct.* (Feb.) vol. iii. p. 755. See EADMER, Vit. S. Oswald, *Ang. Sac.* vol. ii. pp. 204, 208.

† F. WIGORN, p. 606. See ROG. DE WENDOV. vol. i. pp. 413, 414. ALFORD, vol. iii. pp. 343, 347, 348. SPELMAN, p. 435.

tieth year of his age, in the first indiction, and on the 11th of May, which was the day of Pentecost, was by the saintly archbishops Dunstan and Oswald, and by the other bishops of all England, blessed in the city of Bath, and with the greatest honour and glory consecrated and anointed as king.* The royal crown was worn, and the gifts, which monarchs are accustomed to bestow at their coronations upon their nobles, were then distributed by him.†

> "Much bliss there was, by all enjoyed
> "On the happy day, named Pentecost:
> "Crowds of priests, and throngs of monks
> "In council sage, were gathered there."‡

From the sixteenth year of his age, when Edgar was constituted a king, until his thirtieth year, he had reigned, and yet had never worn the insignia of royalty.§ The period affixed for the king's penance had been then completed;‖ and the holy archbishop Dunstan therefore summoned together all the princes of the English empire, with the bishops, abbots, and all others invested with ecclesiastical dignity, and placed upon the monarch's head the crown, in the presence of the assembled people —amid the joy and congratulations of all—amid the loud

---

* F. Wigorn, p. 606.

† Rog. de Wend., vol. i, p. 414.

‡ *Sax. Chron.* ad an. 973.

§ "A sextodecimo ætatis anno, quo rex constitutus est, usque ad tricesimum, sine regio insigni regnaverit." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 160. See Hardy's notes, vol. i. pp. 248, 254.

‖ "Pœnitentiæ tempus exactum fuisset." Osbern, Vit. S. Dunstan, c. 8, § 45. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai,) vol. iv. p. 372.

expressions of thankfulness to God, and of praises for St. Dunstan.*

In the year 973, the emperor Otho died.† This was Otho the First, who had been united in marriage with the aunt of King Edgar, who had also bestowed upon the English monarch gifts of great value, and who had concluded with him a treaty of peace, couched in the strongest terms.‡

In the year 974,§ Edgar, with an immense fleet, sailed round the northern lands of Britain, and then proceeded to Chester, where, in accordance with his commands, he was met by his eight tributary kings :—viz. Kenneth, king of the Scots; Malcolm, king of the Cumbrians; Maccus,

---

* Osbern, Vit. S. Dunst. c. 8, § 45. *Act. Sanct.* (Mai) vol. iv. p. 372. See H. Hunt. lib. v. p. 356; Rog. de Hoveden, p. 426; Ethelwerd, lib. iv. c. 9, p. 849; *Chron. Petriburgens*, ad an. 973, p. 31, (Giles); S. Dunelm, p. 159. The royal robes worn by Edgar at his coronation were bestowed by him, on account of their great value, upon Glastonbury, as a decoration for the altar; "Vestem etiam regalem, in qua fuerat coronatus, pretiosissimam contulit, ut altaris cederet ornamento." W. Malmsb. *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.* p. 322. This ancient and catholic mode of disposing of such costly habiliments seems somewhat more decorous than that adopted with regard to the coronation robes of the English king, George IV., which were sold by auction, and afterwards used as one of the minor attractions of Madame Tussaud's exhibition of wax-works!

† *Chron. Petriburgens*, ad an. 973, p. 31, (Giles).

‡ F. Wigorn, p. 606, (Frankfort ed.) p. 139. (E.H.S.)

§ R. de Wend. vol. i. p. 415. The date is not inconsistent with Florence's "interjecto deinde tempore," or the "and sona æfter" of the Saxon Chronicle.

the lord of many isles; and five others, Dufnal, Siwerth, Howel, James, and Juchil;* and they there swore that they would be faithful to him, and that they would aid him in all his undertakings both by land and by sea.† Edgar, with all these kings, upon a certain day went into a boat, in which they were placed as his oarsmen, and he himself took the rudder, and skilfully guided the boat through the waters of the river Dee, whilst there were to be seen in his train an immense fleet of boats, all manned by his ealdormen and thanes. In this order did King Edgar go from his palace to the monastery of St. John the Baptist; and there having offered up his prayers, he returned with the same wondrous magnificence to his palace; and as he was about to enter within its portal, it is reported that he said, "now at length he was able to leave a glorious "legacy to his successors, for each could now truly boast

---

* F. WIGORN, p. 607. The names of the latter are thus stated by ROG. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 415, "Macone rege *Monæ* et plurimarum insularum, Dusual rege *Demetiæ*, Siferth et Huwal regibus *Walliæ*, Jacobo rege Galwalliæ, et Tukil *Westimeriæ*." The *Saxon Chronicle* states there did not come to meet him but "six kings;" but this may be accounted for by the author not deeming such petty rulers as "James, king of Gallaway, and Jukill, of Westmoreland," (see Stow's Chronicle, pp. 85, 86), as being worthy of being placed in the same rank with potentates like to Kenneth, king of Scotland, or "the arch-pirate," Maccus, "the king of Man, and of many islands." As to this Maccus, see TURNER'S *History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 265, note 27.

† "Et quod sibi fideles et terra et mari co-operatores esse vellent, juraverunt." F. WIGORN, p. 607. "Juramentum fidelitatis accepit." R. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 415. "And they all covenanted with him that they would be his allies both by sea and land." *Sax. Chron.* by INGRAM, p. 161. "Sex reges, qui omnes ditioni eis subjecti sunt, et omnes illi domino debitam dederunt fidem se terra et mari servituros ei ad ejus imperium." H. HUNT. *Hist.* lib. v. p. 356. See R. HOVEDEN, p. 426; S. DUNELM, p. 159.

"that he was the supreme sovereign of the English, be-
"cause he could prove by the public display of the honours
"thus yielded, that so many kings were subjected to his
"sway."*

It was a great and glorious festivity. Words cannot pourtray its grandeur and gorgeous magnificence, nor the feelings it excited, when men beheld that monarch to whose nod the very elements seemed to be subjected, bowing down in humble and devout prayer, a suppliant for mercy to his Creator and his God.†

---

* "Tunc demum quemque suorum successorum se gloriari posse regem Anglorum fore, cum tot regibus obsequentibus potiretur pompa talium honorum." F. WIGORN, pp. 606, 607, (Frankfort ed.) vol. i. p. 142. (E.H.S.) Mr. Turner uncharitably designates this exhibition on the river Dee as "puerile vanity" on the part of Edgar, (*History of the Anglo Saxons*, vol. ii. p. 266;) but in making such a charge, Mr. Turner was forgetful of the manners of the age on which he passes so severe a censure. Every fact was symbolized by some demonstrative proof; the slave was manumitted, the tillage land transferred by some of its productions; the forest and hunting ground with a horn; and here, the rowing of the boat by the sub-kings, whilst the Basileus held the rudder, was the proof and the symbol of the fact, that *they* acknowledged *him* as their superior, and that *their* phÿsical energies were to be guided by *his* will. The words which Edgar used shewed the policy of his proceeding—that it was intended, not to gratify any "puerile vanity," but to be beneficial to his successors; and the expressions of Knyghton demonstrate that it was so considered, and so relied upon by the successors of King Edgar. See *Event. Ang.* p. 2485. See also as to symbols indicating an absolute or qualified possession of property, PALGRAVE's *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 141, vol. ii. p. ccxxvii; HICKES, *Dissert. Epist. B. Shower*, § 12; *Thesaur. Ling. Vett.* vol. iii. pp. 83—87. GRIMM *Deutsche Rechts Alterthumer*, c. iv. "Symbole" pp. 109—207.

† ETHELRED, *Geneal. Reg. Ang.* p. 362. See BROMTON, *Chron.* p. 869.

It was about this time (in the year 974) that the clerks whom king Edwy, the brother of Edgar had iniquitously intruded upon the monastery of Malmsbury were expelled, that monks were recalled to it, and that Ælfric, then a man very celebrated in ecclesiastical affairs, was appointed as abbot, and that a charter was bestowed in the following terms upon Malmsbury:*

"I, Edgar, supreme sovereign of the entire of Albion, "as well of the kings that dwell upon its coasts, as in "all its islands around, so that by the superabundant "grace of God I find myself exalted, through the sub- "mission of those kings, to a dignity which none of my "progenitors ever before enjoyed; and therefore have I "long and anxiously reflected how I might best afford the "proof of my gratitude, by making the richest offering in "my gift, and to the utmost of my ability, to Him who is "the Lord and King of the kings of this earth. In this "respect the supreme goodness of God has been favour- "ably pleased to suggest to me, whilst anxious, vigilant, "and watchful, to do something worthy of the unceasing, "and ever vigilant devotion that animated me; and that is, "that I should restore in my dominions the holy monas- "teries, which as they demonstrated in their outward ap- "pearance by their crumbling walls, and their rotting "rafters, that they were going to decay, so was to be "found that, which was a still greater calamity, that their "interior was neglected, and the service of God either "absolutely abandoned, or inefficiently performed within "their precincts. Hence have clerks, alike ignorant and

---

* INGULPH., p. 47. See W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 152, *de Pont.*, lib. v. p. 365.

"unrestrained by subjection to the discipline of any reli-
"gious rule, been ejected by me; and hence too have I ap-
"pointed in various places, as shepherds and guides for the
"people, a different and holier order of men, namely, persons
"wearing the monastic habit, and upon them have I con-
"ferred abundant gifts for the purpose of restoring the
"churches, wheresoever they have fallen into ruin.
"Amongst such persons so appointed is one named Ælfric,
"a true and thorough priest in every respect—and to
"whom is now confided that monastery, of which the
"English name is Malmsbury."*

— —

In the year 975, king Edgar, looking to what was alike calculated to be of advantage to the external prosperity,

---

* W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 153. See Ingulph., pp. 47, 48. W. Malmsb. *De Pont.*, lib. v. pp. 365, 366. We omit, both the recital of the land said to be transferred to the monastery by the king, as well as the restoration of that which had been improperly alienated by the "clerks," and of which the unjust possession was sought to be retained by a contentious person named Edelnoth. The monastery was declared to be endowed by Edgar, for the benefit of his own soul, in honour of the Saviour, of the Blessed Virgin, of S.S. Peter and Paul, and of the beloved bishop St. Aldhelm. "Cui pro commoditate animæ meæ, ob salvatoris nostri, ejusque Θεοτοκου semper virginis Mariæ necnon apostolorum Petri et Pauli, Aldelmique almi præsulis." Wm. of Malmsbury mentions that on the restoration of the monastery, it was presented with an organ by St. Dunstan, on which was engraved in brazen letters these lines;

"Organa do Sancto Præsul Dunstanus Aldelmo
"Perdat hic æternum, qui vult hinc tollere, regnum."

Lib. v., de Pont., p. 366.

In this year, 974, charters were granted to the monasteries of Thorney, and Ramsey, and a miracle occurred upon the removal of the body of the sainted virgin Withburga to Ely. See Alford, vol. iii. p. 374, § 6, p. 375, § 15, p. 376, § 8, p. 378, § 12, p. 381, § 25, p. 382, § 20.

and the internal peace of his country collected together four thousand eight hundred strong ships, one thousand two hundred of which were sent by him to guard the western coast, a thousand two hundred to watch over the southern waters, and a thousand two hundred to cruise in the northern sea. All these were intended by him to defend the kingdom from foreign nations, and to save his subjects from the horrors and calamities of war.*

Every winter and every spring Edgar rode through all the provinces of his kingdom, investigated the judgments of those entrusted with power, and inflicted severe punishments upon those who had been found the violators of the rules of equity; thus demonstrating in every act that he was as great a lover of justice, as he was of an unswerving integrity, and as regarding both qualities of indispensible advantage to the commonwealth.† The stainless sanctity of his manners seemed to impart an additional severity to his demeanour in some respects, for he would permit no

---

* Roc. de Wend., vol. i. pp. 415, 416. The motive to this extraordinary armament is not now known, but might have served its purpose by deterring the Northmen from an invasion of England, which perhaps was contemplated at the time, and of which information, possibly, was conveyed to Egbert, who had many friends among the Danes. In 975, a greater number of ships than usual was employed to discharge a duty, that was annually performed; for "every summer, upon the conclusion of the festival of Easter he sent his ships, upon a cruise, the eastern fleet to the western portion of the island, and the western to the north, and then the northern squadron round towards the east, and always vigilant lest the country should be attacked by pirates." W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 156, see *Chron. Mailros.*, p. 150. S. Dunelm, *Gest. Reg.*, p. 160. Bromton, p. 869. F. Wigorn, p. 607.

† W. Malmsb., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 156. See F. Wigorn, p. 607.

man, however high in rank or exalted in dignity, to violate the laws with impunity.* During his reign no man dared to be a stealthy thief or a highway robber, unless he would at the cost of his own life make an attempt upon the property of another. No man could, if dishonest, hope to escape him, who sought to exterminate every wild and ferocious beast of prey, in all parts of his dominions, and who in accordance with that desire, had, by public edict, imposed as a tribute upon Judwall, king of Wales, the annual payment of three hundred wolves' heads—a tribute that was complied with for three years, and then ceased, as the Welsh king declared there were no more wolves to be found in his province.†

Throughout the entire of England a new coinage was made in accordance with the commands of king Edgar, for the old had been so reduced by the fraud of cheating clippers, that scarcely any piece was found to be of worth when its value was tested in the scales.‡

---

* "And let the judge who judges wrong to another pay to the king one hundred and twenty shillings as 'bot,' unless he dare to prove on oath, that he knew it not more rightly; and let him forfeit for ever his thaneship; unless he will buy it of the king, so as he is willing to allow him; and let the bishop of the shire exact the bot into the king's hands." *Edgar's Laws*, ii. § 3. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, p. 113.

† W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 155. See CARADOC, p. 56.

‡ ROG. DE WEND., vol. i. p. 416. "Eadgar's care for a uniform monetary standard, and for the general observance of the Winchester weights and measures (Laws of Eadgar ii. p. 8,) together with other enactments, prove how greatly commerce must have increased and been esteemed in the country during his reign." LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 145.

The fame of Edgar was the theme of all men's tongues, and was carried to every land, so that foreigners, Saxons, Flemings, and even Danes were constantly arriving in this country, and were honoured with friendly interviews by the sovereign.* The arrival of these strangers was a very great mischief to the natives, for they acquired from the Saxons rudeness of manners, from the Flemings an enervating effeminacy, and from the Danes the evil custom of indulging in potations.† Previous to this period the

---

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 148.

† "Quamobrem rex clavos in ciphis fecit infigi, ut per emensos ciphorum terminos biberent ad mensuram." BROMTON, *Chron.*, p. 869. In MALMSBURY, *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 149, the credit of this invention is given to St. Dunstan, of whom he states, that "so extremely anxious was he to preserve peace even in trivial matters, that, as his countrymen used to assemble in taverns (in tabernis convenientes,) and when somewhat disturbed by liquor, quarrel as to the portion each should imbibe, he ordered gold or silver pegs to be fastened in the pots, so that each might know his just measure, neither drink more than was fair himself, nor force others to take more than was proper for them." Mr. Hardy, in his notes upon Malmsbury, vol. i. p. 237, note 4, remarks upon this passage: "Hence the phrase 'to drink to the pin.' The custom of drinking to the pin is, however, supposed to have been introduced into England by the Danes, who fixed a pin inside of the wassail bowl; and to drink exactly to the pin was a feat only to be acquired by long practice," &c. The evils of intoxication must have been increased by the number of Danes then to be found in England. Bromton declares that there was scarcely a little village in which Danes were not to be found. "Vix fuit in Anglia viculus in quo Daci cum Anglis non habitarent." *Chron.* p. 869. The laws of Edgar refer more than once to the Danes in his dominions. "Let this ordinance," he says, "be common to all the people, whether English, Danes, or Britons." Supplement § 2. He recognizes the fidelity and attachment of the Danes in the following paragraph.

"Then will I, that, with the Danes, such good laws stand as they may best choose, and as I have ever permitted to them, and

English had been free from such vices. They had, with a most becoming and natural simplicity, adhered to their ancient habits, and had never before admired the manners of foreigners. For their departure from those principles Edgar rightly and properly has been censured by authors; but as to the other infamies promulgated against him, they are only to be regarded as the inventions of ballad mongers.*

On Thursday, the 8th of July, in the year 975,† he who was the very flower and adornment of kings, the glory and the honour of Englishmen, the pacific sovereign, Edgar, whose generosity and whose magnificence had filled the entire of Europe, did, in the thirty-second year of his age, and the sixteenth year of his reign, depart from this life, and change his earthly for an eternal kingdom. His body was conveyed to Glastonbury, and in that place interred with all the customary honours that are bestowed upon a monarch.‡

" Wisely he sought, in counsel oft
" His people's good, before his God,
" Before the world,
" One misdeed he did

---

will permit, so long as life shall last me, *for your fidelity which ye have ever shown me.*" Supplement § 12. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, pp. 116, 117.

* W. MALMSB., *Gest. Reg. Ang.*, lib. ii. § 148.

† F. WIGORN, p. 607. See *Sax. Chron.*, ad an. 975.

‡ R. DE WEND. vol. i. p. 417. Bromton states, on the authority of Welsh authors, that Edgar had a vision nine days before his death of a Welsh bishop, who complained of his shrine in Glamorganshire having been spoliated. That which had been taken was restored, in compliance with the commands of Edgar. See *Chron.* p. 870.

"That foreign tastes too much he loved,
"And heathen manners within this land
"He brought too fast.
"Outlandish men hither enticed,
"And to this earth attracted crowds
"Of worthless men.
"But God him grant, that his good deeds
"Be weightier far than his misdeeds,
"To his soul's redemption
"On the judgement day."*

This fact, with respect to King Edgar, is one that ought not to be permitted to pass into oblivion: viz. that in the year 1052, upon his tomb being opened by the abbot Eilward, his body was found perfectly free from the slightest stain of corruption.† The circumstance in itself was assuredly one that ought to have disposed the mind of the abbot to feelings of reverence, instead of exciting it to such a state of audacity, that, perceiving the size of the royal body too large to permit its ingress into the receptacle assigned for it, he, with the steel instrument he had in his hand, profanely hacked it—but the instant that he did so, torrents of blood burst from the king's corpse, and as they bubbled forth shook the hearts of the beholders with horror and dismay! The king's body was then deposited in a shrine,‡ which he himself had bestowed upon the church,

* *Sax. Chron.* (INGRAM's translation,) p. 152.

† W. MALMSB. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 160. See *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.* p. 324.

‡ This was, it is elsewhere said by Malmsbury—"a large shrine covered with gold and silver, inlaid with beautifully moulded images in ivory"—"scrinium magnum argento et auro co-opertum, cum imaginibus ex ebore intersertis." *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.* p. 322.

and placed upon the altar along with the head of St. Appolinaris, and the relics of the martyr Vincent—both also the gifts of King Edgar, and intended by him as a decoration and an honour to the house of God.*

As to the rash man who had desecrated the king's remains, his intellects abandoned him, and upon his retiring almost immediately afterwards from the church, he was found stark dead, and his neck broken. These, however, were not the only proofs of the sanctity of the king. In the process of time other and more convincing testimony was afforded, as for instance the cures at his shrine of the insane and the blind.†

Justly, therefore, is there possessed by Edgar the fame amongst the English people, and that too resting on no slight foundation, that neither in his own, nor at any former age, was there a king to be compared with him for upright judgment and even-handed justice. The lips of no king could have been more holy than his; the actions of no monarch more in accordance with equity than his—those vices being excepted which were afterwards obliterated by the practise of mighty virtues. He rendered his country and his own name illustrious by the exalted fortitude of his conduct; by the glory of his achievements, and by

---

* These were not the only gifts bestowed by Edgar upon the church of Glastonbury abbey, for Malmsbury, having specified these, also adds; "Multas insuper reliquias, quas per universas terras a se peragratas adquisivit cum reliquiis duorum innocentium de Bethleem." *Antiq. Glaston.* p. 322.

† "Sed in ulteriora processit, sanato ibi furioso et cæco." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 160. See *Antiq. Glaston. Eccles.* p. 324.

the multiplicity of services conferred by him upon those who devoted themselves to God.

With his death the greatness of England declined, and the hope of temporal prosperity seemed to be withdrawn from the hearts of Englishmen.*

---

* "Post mortem ejus res et spes Anglorum retro sublapsæ." W. Malmsb. *Gest. Reg. Ang.* lib. ii. § 160. Henry of Huntingdon concludes his eulogium upon Edgar with the following lines:—

"Auctor opum, vindex scelerum, largitor honorum,
Sceptriger Edgarus regna superna petit.
Hic alter Salomon, legum pater, orbita pacis,
Quod caruit bellis, claruit inde magis.
Templa Deo, templis monachos, monachis dedit agros,
Nequitiæ lapsum, justitiæque locum.
Novit enim regno verum perquirere falso,
Immensum modico, perpetuumque brevi."

Hist. lib. v. p. 356. See R. de Hoveden, p. 426; Ethelwerd, p. 849; *Hist. Rames.* pp. 393, 402; *Hist. Eliens.* pp. 465, 466; Wallingford, p. 545; Fordun, pp. 676, 678; Ingulph. p. 54; *Chron. Mailros.* p. 150; S. Dunelm, pp. 157, 160; Ethelred, pp. 359, 362; Bromton, pp. 864, 870; *Act. Sanct.* (Julii) vol. ii. pp. 659, 665; Harpsfield, *Hist. Eccles. Ang.* x. *Sæc.* c. 3, p. 184, 187; Baronius, vol. xvi. p. 232, § xi.; Alford, vol. iii. pp. 382, 383.

CANONS ENACTED UNDER KING EDGAR.

Extracts from the secular laws of Edgar have already been given in the notes of this chapter. In examining its ecclesiastical laws, we desire solely to point the attention of the reader to the effect those laws must have had on the condition of the most helpless of all classes—the poor, and the slaves. We can best judge of the spirit of those restorers of monkery, and builders up of monasteries—of those who insisted on the ancient observances of the church, as to the sacrifices at the altar, and a celibacy of those who as priests offered sacrifice—by looking to what they did for the poor. *By their own acts let them be judged.*

To the priests in hearing confessions, and in imposing penances it is said by Dunstan, Oswald, and Ethelwold:

"Bear thou in mind that thou art never to adjudge the same to the powerful and to the lowly; to the free and to the slave; to the old and to the young; to the hale and to the sickly; to the humble and to the proud; to the strong and to the feeble, to those in orders and to laymen.

"In every deed a discreet judge shall wisely distinguish how it be done, and where, or when * * * *And always as a man is mightier or of higher degree, so shall he the more deeply amend wrong, before God, and before the world;* because the powerful and the feeble may not lift a like burden, nor the sickly a like one with the hale: and, therefore, we must moderate and discreetly distinguish between age and youth, wealthy and poor, hale and sick and every degree." De Confessione, § 3, 4. THORPE'S *Ancient Laws and Institutes*, pp. 402, 403.

Amongst the canonical laws of Dunstan, Oswald, and Ethelwold, affecting the slave-class and the poor, are the following:—

"If any man shall kill his male slave, and that slave be not in fault, let him for his anger fast for three years.

"If any woman shall be moved by any wicked spirit of envy, inflict stripes upon her female slave, and the slave in consequence die, let the woman, the slave's innocence being proved, fast for seven years; but if the slave were guilty, then let the woman fast three years, and ever afterwards repent of the deed that she has done." Modus imponendi pœnitentiam, § 11, 12. THORPE, p. 406.

"If a person shall have sold a man who is a Christian, to those who are heathens, then shall he be deemed not worthy of having any abode among Christian folk, unless the man whom he had sold to strangers be redeemed from slavery by him, and brought home again; and if the seller of the slave have not the power to do this, then let him give to God, the whole price of the slave so sold, let him purchase with other money another slave, and then give that slave his freedom; and let him, moreover, for three full years do penance as his father confessor shall direct him. And, if the man have not the money wherewith he can redeem another slave, then let the penance imposed upon him be the more heavy, and let it be for full seven years, and let such sinner ever afterwards sorrow for his sin." Modus imponendi pœnitentiam, § 43. THORPE, p. 410.

"Penances are devised in various ways, and a man may redeem much with alms.

"He who has the ability, let him raise a church to the glory of God; and, if he have the means, let him give land thereto; and let young men be drawn thither, who may there serve for him,

and may there daily minister to God; and let him also be a benefactor every where to God's church; according as he may have the means; and *facilitate the peoples journeying by bridges over deep waters, and over foul ways;** and distribute for love of God, readily what he has, to the very utmost of his means; and *readily help poor men, widows, and step children, and foreigners;* FREE HIS OWN SLAVES, AND REDEEM TO FREEDOM THEIR SLAVES FROM OTHER MEN; AND ESPECIALLY POOR PLUNDERED MEN; *and feed the needy, and clothe, house, and fire, and bathe and bed them, to their and his own benefit:* let him every where diligently obtain intercession by mass-songs and psalms; and, for his Lord's love, chasten himself very severely by abstinence in meat and drink, and from every bodily lust.

"And he who has yet less means, let him do diligently, according to his condition, that which he can do: let him tithe, for love

---

* In the "*Pii Antistitis Icon*," or, "the Life and Death of the most Reverend Francis Kirwan, bishop of Killala," in the seventeenth century, and the time when the Roman Catholics were suffering persecution, a most interesting incident occurred illustrative of the anxiety of Catholic prelates to benefit the poor by bridge building.

"At one time," observes the author, "bridge-making was held in high repute, as is evident from the fact, that Varro derives the name of pontiff, from bridge-building. Whereas, Francis (Kirwan) held the place of pontiff, without being invested with its character, and ignorant of the pontifical duties which waited him, he expended no trifling labour and money, in spanning rivers, and making stone crossings over marshy ways. While thus employed at the river which runs near Tuam, and which in winter time could not be forded without great difficulty—while thus employed in superintending the masons, it so happened, that William Daniel, the Protestant archbishop of Tuam, utterly ignorant that any such work had been undertaken in the vicinity of his palace, rode by, and, wonder-struck, broke into the following strain. 'Who,' demanded he, 'has been so bold as to construct any building in my jurisdiction and vicinity, without my knowledge or consent?' But when he learned that the work was carried on at Kirwan's cost, he became appeased; nay, sent from his own residence meat and drink to the workmen. He (Daniel) was, in sooth, a man far from being badly disposed, and embraced heterodoxy in his youth, rather from early prejudice than any vice of character." THE REV. C. P. MEEHAN'S translation of the *Pii Antistis Icon*, pp. 68, 71. See also, by the translator, note 27, p. 185. (Dublin, Duffy, 1848.)

of God, all that he owns;* and ponder with himself as often as he has an opportunity; and frequently visit churches with his alms, and greet holy places with his light; and *give the shelter of his house, and meat and protection to those who need it; and fire and food, and bed, and bath: and add clothing, and assist the poor, if he aught can.*

"*Let him visit with good those that are sorrowful and sick, and bury the dead for love of God;* and let himself frequently kneel in secret places, and prostrate himself much on the earth oft and frequently, and fast, and watch, and fervently pray, by day and by night, oft and frequently. And he who has yet less means, let him do according to his degree, earnestly that which he can do; especially let him mortify his body against lust; if he ere, through wanton lust, gave pleasure to the devil, let him now fast on account of that unrighteousness which he ere through satiety perpetrated; let him watch and toil in atonement for having before often slept and been slow, when he should not, or uselessly waked too much; let him suffer cold and cold bath, in atonement for the heat that he through sinful lust any where occasioned; and if he in anger any where have unjustly done violence to any one, let him diligently make amends; and, if any man have greatly angered him, let him forgive it for the love of God; and ever, as much as he can, let him think very earnestly what remedy there may be against every sinful impulse, which, through the devil's seed, had formerly grown up; and if he have brought any one out of the way besides himself, let him diligently bring him again into his right way: this is what I mean; if he have allured any man to sin, let him do what is his duty, let him bring him from it, and lead him into his right way: and let him diligently draw every man from sins; then shall his sins soon be the lighter.

"One doom a man may, *with his confessor's counsel*, doom to himself, who resolutely desires to abstain from his sins, and make atonement for his sins: *let him distribute, for love of God, all that he owns*, and entirely forsake home and country, and all his worldly love, and serve his Lord by day and by night, and mortify himself, so as he can most severely, against his own lust, all the days of his life. What can he more, save that he draw, besides himself, every man to right, so as he can most earnestly." Of Penitents, § 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. THORPE, pp. 412, 413.

* "The holy fathers appointed also that men pay their tithes into God's church. And let the priest go thither, and divide them into three: one part for repair of the church, and *the second for the poor*, the third for God's servants who attend the church." Canons of Ælfric, § 24. THORPE, p. 445.

"Thus may a powerful man, and rich in friends, with the support of his friends, greatly lighten his penance.

"First, in the name of God, with the testimony of his confessor, let him manifest orthodox belief, and have compassion on all those who have sinned against him; and do his confession boldly, and promise cessation, and undertake penance with much sighing.

"Let him then lay aside his carnal weapons, and vain ornaments, and take a staff in his hand, and go barefoot zealously, and put on his body woollen or hair cloth, and not come into a bed, but lie on a pallet, and so do, that in three days the series of vii. years be dispensed with thus: let him proceed with aid; and first let him to him xii. men, and let them fast iii. days on bread, and on green herbs, and on water; and get, in addition thereto, in whatever manner he can, seven times cxx. men, who shall also fast for him iii. days; then will be fasted as many fasts as there are days in vii. years.

"*When a man fasts, then let the dishes that would have been eaten be all distributed to God's poor;* and the three days that a man fasts, let him abandon every worldly occupation, and by day and by night, the oftenest he can, let him remain in church, and, with alms-light, earnestly watch there, and cry to God, and implore forgiveness, with groaning spirit, and kneel frequently on the sign of the cross; sometimes, down extend himself; and let the powerful man try earnestly to shed tears from his eyes, and bewail his sins; and *let a man then feed those three days as many of God's poor as he possibly can; and on the fourth day, bathe them all, and shelter them, and distribute money; and let the penitent himself employ himself in washing their feet,* and let as many masses be said for him on that day as can possibly be obtained, and at the last, let absolution be given him; and then let him go to housel,*

---

* *Housel*—the blessed sacrament. In the canons enacted under King Edgar, the following are amongst the rules laid down with respect to it:

"And we enjoin, that no priest, on any account, ever celebrate mass, except on a hallowed altar.

"And we enjoin, that every priest have a corporale, when he celebrates mass, and a subucula under his alb, and all his mass-vestment worthily appointed.

"And we enjoin, that no one unfasting taste of the housel, unless it be for extreme sickness.

"And we enjoin, that a priest have housel always ready for those who need it, and that he carefully preserve it in purity, and

unless he be so highly criminal that he yet cannot; and then let him at least promise, that he ever therefore will perform God's will; and, though Gods succour, ever abstain from every unrighteousness to the utmost of his power; and his Christianity righteously uphold, and every heathenism totally cast away; both thoughts and habits, words and works diligently correct; every unrighteousness suppress through God's succour, as he ever most diligently may; and to his own great benefit he does it, who performs that which he promised to God.

---

take heed that it be not impaired by age; but if it be impaired, so that it cannot be used, then let it be burned in a pure fire, and the ashes be brought under the altar, and let him who neglected it earnestly make 'bot' to God.

"And we enjoin, that no priest ever presume to celebrate mass, unless he have all things fitting for the housel; that is, a pure oblation, and pure wine, and pure water: woe to him who undertakes to celebrate mass, unless he have every of these; and woe to him who there adds any foul thing; like unto what the Jews did, when they mingled vinegar and gall together, and then, in mockery of him, offered it to Christ.

"And we enjoin, that it never happen that a priest celebrate mass, and not taste the housel himself; and that hallowed housel be never hallowed a second time.

"And we enjoin, that every chalice be molten, in which the housel is hallowed; and that none be hallowed in a wooden one.

"And we enjoin, that no woman come near to the altar, while mass is celebrating." § 31, 33, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41. THORPE, pp. 398, 399. See as to the word "housel" in *Laws of Athelstan*, p. 425 in this volume.

The reason adduced in the canons of Ælfric for priests under the new law not being allowed to have wives, whilst under the old law they were permitted to marry, is because the former offer up the holy sacrifice of the mass, and consecrate therein the blessed sacrament, whilst the latter sacrificed merely beasts of the field.

"They" (under the old law) might well have wives in those days, because *they never celebrated mass, nor administered the housel to men*, but offered beasts in the old wise, *until Christ hallowed the housel before his passion, and appointed the mass, which now stands through him.* (Hy mihton tha wel habban wif or tham dagum; forthan the hy næfre ne mæssodon. ne menn ne huslodon. ac offrodon nytenu on tha ealdan wisan. oth thæt Grist halgode husl ær his throwunge. and tha mæssan astealde. the stent nu thurh hyne.) *Canons of Ælfric*, § 7. THORPE, p. 442.

This is the alleviation of the penance of a man powerful, and rich in friends; but one not possessing means may not so proceed; but must seek it in himself the more diligently; and that is also justest, that every one avenge his own misdeeds on himself, with diligent 'bot.' Scriptum est enim: Quia unusquisque onus suum portabit." Of powerful men, § 1, 2, 3, 4. THORPE, pp. 414, 415.

END OF VOL. II.

J. BILLING, PRINTER, WOKING, SURREY.

00140940

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 27 February, 2016